

Designing Contemplative Prayer
in the Korean Protestant Church Context

A Professional Project
presented to
the Faculty of the
Claremont School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Tong Soo Han

May 2008

© 2007

Tong Soo Han

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



CLAREMONT
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

This professional project, completed by

Tong Soo Han

has been presented to and accepted by the

Faculty of the Claremont School of Theology

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee:

Andrew Dreitcer, Chairperson

Michael A. Mata

Dean: Susan L. Nelson

May 2008

ABSTRACT

Designing Contemplative Prayer in the Korean Protestant Church Context

by

Tong Soo Han

This project carefully examines a possibility of applying contemplative prayer to the Korean Protestant church context. The contemplative prayer exercise program at the Zion Korean United Methodist Church in Carson City, California, to test a potentiality of the application, showed a positive result after analyzing the pre-program questionnaires, the post-program questionnaires, and the session meetings. To understand and practice contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant church context helps to broaden the spiritual experiences of Korean Protestant Christians by supplementing Tongsung prayer, which has been the dominant prayer form in the Korean Protestant church.

Contemplative prayer is one of the profound prayer traditions, because contemplative prayer seeks an experience of the union with God through various prayer styles. A contemplative prayer is a spiritual communication between God and oneself as one is caught up by God beyond one's own effort. One of the ways of contemplative prayer, the apophatic way, which is rooted in the Platonic world view and transcendental theology, is the way of negation of concepts, symbols, feelings, and senses in an approach toward God. On the contrary, the kataphatic way, which is derived from Aristotle's philosophical perspective and incarnational theology, is the way of attempting to approach God through intellectual, emotional, sensory, and visual methods. The apophatic prayer includes Cassian's prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, *lectio divina*

in the Benedictine tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition. The kataphatic prayer includes Ignatius of Loyola's imaginative prayer in the Ignatian tradition.

Even though many contemplative prayers use the Bible for their prayers, there is no exact contemplative prayer form and style in the Bible. Rather, contemplative prayer was developed during the start of monasticism. In the Korean religious context, there are some similar prayer forms and styles with contemplative prayer, although Korean religions, such as Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, do not have an idea of the relationship between God and a human being as in the Western sense.

Although Korean Protestant Christians have strong prayer lives through the Tongsung prayer, applying contemplative prayer to Korean Christians produces a wider understanding of prayer and a spiritual joy which will permit exploration of a new spiritual prayer world.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I thank my father, Bishop Dr. Chung Suk Han, who is a model of my faith and a wonderful supporter. Also, thanks goes to my Mother who takes a rest in heaven. I appreciate my wife, Eun Hye, and two daughters, Esther and Lydia, who are prayerful supporters and good friends. I appreciate Mr. Ken Wagoner who proofread my project and gave good advice. I thank my church family who pray for me everyday. I really appreciate Professor Andy Dreitcer and Professor Michael Mata who have led me to spiritual and academic maturity. I thank God.

Table of Contents

Chapter	Page
1. Introduction -----	1
Problem Addressed by the Project -----	1
Importance of the Problem -----	1
Thesis -----	4
Work Previously Done in the Field -----	4
Scope and Limitations of the Project -----	7
Procedure for Integration -----	8
Chapter Outlines -----	9
2. Overview of Contemplative Prayer -----	12
Definition of Contemplative Prayer -----	12
Apophatic and Kataphatic Prayer -----	16
The Philosophical and Theological Background of the Apophatic Prayer ---	17
The Philosophical and Theological Background of the Kataphatic Prayer ---	19
The Background of Monasticism -----	22
Five Important Different Contemplative Prayer Traditions -----	25
Cassian's Prayer in the Desert Father's Tradition -----	25
Lectio Divina in the Benedictine Tradition -----	29
Jesus Prayer in the Orthodox Tradition -----	31
The Cloud of Unknowing -----	33
Ignatius of Loyola's Prayer in the Kataphatic Style -----	35

3. Contemplative Prayer in the Bible	42
Prayers in the Old Testament	43
God and the Human Being in the Old Testament	43
Hebraic Prayers	45
Petition	46
Thanksgiving	48
Intercession	49
Prayers in the New Testament	51
God and the Human Being in the New Testament	52
Prayer in the New Testament	53
Petition	54
Thanksgiving	59
Intercession	61
4. Contemplative Prayer in the Korean Religions	65
Shamanism	65
Buddhism	69
Confucianism	73
Tongsung Prayer	76
5. Contemplative Prayer Exercise Program in the Zion Korean United Methodist Church	79
Description of the Project	79
The Role of the Writer	79
The Zion United Methodist Church and the Korean Immigrant Protestant Church	81
Analysis of Participants	84

Project Design	86
Evaluation	92
6. Conclusion	95
Appendix : Questionnaires for Program Participants	99
Bibliography	102

Chapter 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by the Project

This project deals with the absence of particular prayer practices and the need to broaden conceptual understandings of prayer to include contemplative prayer, which is not well-known in the Korean Protestant church, but which can supplement Tongsung prayer, which is a petition-dominated prayer style practiced widely in the Korean Protestant churches.

Importance of the Problem

The Korean church has grown rapidly in various ways due to cultural, religious, and social factors. By emphasizing the church's function of mission, education and worship, the Korean church has succeeded in terms of quantitative growth. Moreover, the emphasis on prayer has resulted in the rapid growth in Korean Christian spirituality. Many prayer meetings, such as everyday early-morning prayer meeting, Wednesday night prayer meeting, Friday late night prayer meeting, and many small prayer group meetings have led to the development of prayer-centered Christian spirituality in the Korean Protestant church. Furthermore, the meetings have shaped the nature of Korean Protestant Spirituality. Those prayer meetings have encouraged church members to gather together for prayer and to share their experiences for new hope. Kenneth S. Kantzer reported,

I asked a well-known Korean pastor why he thought the Korean church has flourished so magnificently in the last 50 years. He put his chin in his hand

thoughtfully and didn't answer for several minutes. Then, "I think it is because we lived under severe Japanese persecution so long." He said slowly, "We learned to have no hope in ourselves, but only in God. And we learned to pray. We have been a suffering church and, therefore, a praying church. That is what I think explains it."¹

Surely, prayer meetings have contributed to the development of the Korean Protestant church, and it is true that many Korean Christians have participated in the prayer meetings actively.

The prayer style which has dominated in the prayer meetings is Tongsung prayer. It is a prayer tradition in the Korean Protestant church which reflects the influence of both the Korean culture and that of the missionaries who came from America. The style of Tongsung prayer is prayer spoken together with a loud voice. This prayer helped early Korean Christians to confess and repent of sin and experience the presence of God in their heart. We can see the style of Tongsung prayer through a missionary's report during the revival meeting in 1907. "After a short sermon, Mr. (Graham) Lee took charge of the meeting and called for prayer. So many began praying that Mr. Lee said, "if you want to pray like that, all pray," and the whole audience began to pray out loud all together. The effect was indescribable, not confusion, but a vast harmony of souls and spirit, a mingling together of souls moved by an irresistible impulse of prayer. The prayer sounded to me like the falling of many waters, an ocean of prayer beating against God's throne."²

However, the Tongsung prayer tradition in the Korean Protestant church has problems. Its dominance has led to the exclusion of other traditions of prayer. At the

¹ Kenneth S. Kantzer, "What Happens When Koreans Pray," Christianity Today, Aug. 16, 1993, 13.

² L. George Paik, The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910 (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1970), 371.

present time, many Korean Protestant Christians regard prayer as a conversation with God to petition for blessings and problem solving. Korean Christians should be introduced to other prayer traditions in order to broaden their understanding of prayer. The Bible shows that prayer is not only a petition (Matthew 7) but also a resting in God (Psalms). Furthermore, there have been contemplative prayers, which seek to be in union with God, in the history of Christianity. Another problem is that even though Tongsung prayer includes repentance, praising, thanksgiving, and mystical experience, the major content of Tongsung prayer today is a petition for material blessings. This petition-dominated Tongsung prayer has been influenced by Korean culture, religions, and other social elements. Korean Shamanism has especially influenced the petition-dominated prayer style for material blessings. Tongsung prayer should be supplemented with other prayer forms that may contribute to the development of a Christian's spirituality into deeper states or onto higher levels. The Korean Protestant church should supplement Tongsung prayer through introducing and practicing other prayer styles because various prayer traditions could broaden the worship and spiritual experiences of Korean Christians.

There have been various prayer traditions in the history of Christian spirituality. However, in order to supplement Tongsung prayer, contemplative prayer is one of the most suitable prayer traditions because contemplative prayer seeks an experience of the presence of God without an emphasis on materialistic blessings. Also, contemplative prayer can help the Korean Protestant church to understand a fuller meaning of prayer. The concern of the church ministry should be expanded to the extent that it develops into

a more mature spiritual community through teaching and practicing the merits of other prayer traditions such as contemplative prayer.

Some Korean Protestant churches have tried to find other suitable prayer styles to complement Tongsung prayer and Korean Protestant spirituality since the early 1990's. Some churches have designed new spiritual retreat programs, and they have adapted Catholic spiritual retreat programs, like *Tres Dias*, to be applicable to the Korean Protestant churches. Therefore, as one of the ways to broaden the Korean Protestant prayer tradition and spirituality, it is very important to understand contemplative prayer, one of the important prayer traditions in the history of Christian spirituality, and to introduce it into the Korean Protestant church.

Thesis

My thesis is that to understand and practice contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant church context could help to broaden the spiritual experiences of Korean Protestant Christians by supplementing Tongsung prayer, which has been the dominant prayer form in the Korean Protestant church.

Work Previously Done in the Field

There has been no published book or article about an attempt to apply contemplative prayer to the Korean church context. However, there are many academic approaches to contemplative prayer in the history of Christian spirituality, prayer in the Bible, and theological, social, and cultural background of prayer in Korea. In relation to research of contemplative prayer, Ken Kaisch's book Finding God: A Handbook of

Christian Meditation gives us not only the theoretical research to contemplative prayer but also the practical exercises of contemplative prayer for Christians of today.³ In Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness God, Tilden Edwards shows several ways of designing prayer exercises following each prayer tradition.⁴ These two books can help to make contemplative prayer exercises applicable to Korean Christians.

Also, there are many research books and articles about contemplative prayer. In Light from Light, Louis Dupre and James Wiseman present various mystical theologians and those theologies with each original text in terms of contemplation.⁵ This book helps us to understand the theological variety of contemplative prayer and its historical stream. Kijong Ryu also presents many theologians and theologies in terms of contemplation in Kidokkyo Youngsung (Christian Spirituality).⁶ Spirituality and History by Phillip Sheldrake shows not only the relationship between spirituality and historical context but also types of spirituality.⁷ These books can lead us to formulate conceptual and historical understandings of contemplative prayer.

Furthermore, original texts in each era and those commentaries can lead us to a deeper comprehension about contemplative prayer. Especially, there are many commentaries and research books about original texts. For examples, Cassian's Prayer for the 21st Century by John Levko points out the contemplative characteristics of

³ Ken Kaisch, Finding God: A Handbook of Christian Meditation (New York: Paulist Press, 1994).

⁴ Tilden Edwards, Living in the Presence : Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness of God (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994).

⁵ Louis Dupre and James A. Wiseman, eds., Light from Light: An Anthology of Christian Mysticism, 2nd ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 2001).

⁶ Kijong Ryu, Kidokkyo Youngsung (Christian Spirituality) (Seoul: Eunsung, 1997).

⁷ Phillip Sheldrake, Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method, rev. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995).

Cassian's prayer.⁸ The Way of A Pilgrim, foreword by Huston Smith, shows the characteristics of Jesus prayer as a contemplative prayer.⁹

In relation to biblical understandings of prayer, Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue by Samuel Balentine provides Hebrew understanding of the human being and God and various characteristics of prayer in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰ Richard Longenecker edits various articles about prayer in the New Testament in Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament.¹¹ This edited book shows the philosophical and historical background of prayer and various features of prayer in the New Testament. Prayer in the New Testament by Fred Fisher examines various prayer styles and characteristics.¹² These books help a person to comprehend biblical understandings of prayer in various perspectives.

In relation to prayer in the Korean church context, there are various books and research materials that seek to understand prayer in terms of cultural, social, religious, and theological background of the Korean church context. They, however, do not deal with prayer specifically. Nevertheless, these materials can help in understanding the relationship between prayer in the Korean Protestant church and the cultural, religious, social, theological background of the Korean Protestant church.

There are some Doctor of Ministry projects on prayer in the Korean Protestant church. For example, Jay Suh Yang's Doctor of Ministry Project at the Claremont

⁸ John Levko, Cassian's Prayer for the 21st Century (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2000).

⁹ The Way of A Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way, trans. R. M. French (New York: Harper, 1954; reprint, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1973).

¹⁰ Samuel E. Balentine, Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

¹¹ Richard N. Longenecker, ed., Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001).

¹² Fred L. Fisher, Prayer in the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964).

School of Theology, A Theology of Prayer Reformulated Toward The Korean Church shows the theological and cultural background of the Korean Christians' prayer.¹³ Tai Hyun Chang points out the relationship between Shamanism and Korean Christian spirituality in his Doctor of Ministry project at Claremont School of Theology titled A Study of the Spirituality of Korean Christians: Focused on the Holy Spirit Movement and Shamanism.¹⁴ These works do not mention the characteristics of Tongsung prayer. In fact, until the early 1980's, there have not been academic approaches to prayer and spirituality. Finally, these studies do not explore the need and value of other forms of prayer traditions or practices, and their application to Korean Christians.

Scope and Limitations of the Project

Since there have been many forms of contemplative prayer in the history of Christian spirituality, I cannot deal with all of them. But I will explore five important contemplative prayer forms and styles along with the theologies and practices associated with them. The five prayer forms are Cassian's contemplative prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition, Ignatius of Loyola's imaginative prayer in the Ignatian tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing.

Prayer practice is a life-long activity. However, in order to examine the possibility of introducing contemplative prayer into the Korean Protestant church context, I will design a short-term prayer practice program and conduct it with a small group.

¹³ Jay Suh Yang, A Theology of Prayer Reformulated Toward the Korean Church, D.Min. project, Claremont School of Theology, 1983 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1983).

¹⁴ Tai Hyun Chang, A Study of the Spirituality of Korean Christians: Focused on the Holy Spirit Movement and Shamanism, D.Min. project, Claremont School of Theology, 1988 (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1988).

Also, I will form a small contemplative prayer group with my church members whose primary prayer practice is Tongsung prayer. In this project, I will not consider those persons whose primary prayer practice is something other than Tongsung prayer.

Even though I seek to introduce contemplative prayer into the Korean Protestant church context, Korea is not the only geographical location of this context. For the purpose of this project, I will introduce contemplative prayer to Zion Korean United Methodist Church in Carson City, California, because this congregation retains the characteristics of the Korean Protestant church, even though it is a Korean immigrant church in America.

Procedure for Integration

First, I will present an overview of the history of contemplative prayer and explore its theological and biblical foundations from books and articles. Also, I will use library resources and questionnaires to research the cultural, social, religious, and theological background of prayer in Korea and clarify the characteristics of Tongsung prayer.

Second, I will design and conduct a seven-week-prayer-practice program based on contemplative prayer involving ten church members of Zion Korean United Methodist Church in Carson City, California, whose primary prayer practice is Tongsung prayer. Even though they are all of the 1.5 generation of immigrant Koreans, they are accustomed to the Korean Protestant church context. I will evaluate pre-program questionnaires and post-program questionnaires that group members will complete the first session and the last session in the seven-week program. I will also analyze

participants' journals and conversations in the group and individually, if possible, to evaluate their experience. I will use the literature and the results of my study to make suggestions and recommendations about applying contemplative prayer to the Korean Protestant church context.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter 1: Introduction

The introduction discusses problems addressed by this project; explains the importance of the problem, which includes the situation of prayer practice in the Korean Protestant church; and states the thesis of this project. This chapter also explains the scope and limitations of the project and describes the methodology.

Chapter 2: Overview of Contemplative Prayer

This chapter presents an analytical overview of five major contemplative prayer forms in the history of Christian spirituality: Cassian's contemplative prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition, Ignatius' imaginative prayer in the Ignatian tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition. This overview will serve to clarify salient theological characteristics of these five prayer forms and point out the historical importance of contemplative prayer.

Chapter 3: Contemplative Prayer in the Bible

Chapter 3 introduces biblical understandings of prayer in general and contemplative prayer in particular. First, prayer in the Hebrew Bible is examined.

Second, prayer in the New Testament is discussed. Also, this chapter examines the biblical understanding of contemplative prayer.

Chapter 4: Contemplative Prayer in the Korean Religions

This chapter illuminates the cultural, social, religious, and theological background of prayer in Korea. In relation to culture and religion, I will analyze the characteristics of the prayer traditions of Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, which have formed the Korean religious context. In relation to social problems, I will point out the relationship between prayer and the political and economic situations in Korea. Theologically, I will explain the similar characteristics of prayer in the Korean religions, and compare them with the Christian prayer. Also, I will deal with the characteristics of Tongsung prayer, which is related to the elements of Korean aboriginal religious characteristics.

Chapter 5: Contemplative Prayer Exercise Program in the Zion Korean United Methodist Church

In this chapter, first, I will describe the project. Also, I will introduce the short history of the Zion Korean United Methodist Church and the characteristics of the congregational members in order to understand the concrete context of application. In addition, I will explain the content and schedule of the seven-week prayer exercise program of contemplative prayer. This chapter also includes an evaluation of the results of the application through an analysis of the questionnaires and the participants' journals and conversations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The conclusion will briefly summarize the whole project and offer my own reflections. I will provide suggestions for understanding and practicing contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant Church context.

Chapter 2

Overview of Contemplative Prayer

Definition of Contemplative Prayer

Since there have been many different points of view for contemplative prayer, it is hard to define contemplative prayer exactly. However, one can clarify the meaning of prayer first, and then one can define the meaning of contemplation separately. Finally, one can define the concept of contemplative prayer with the combination of the two definitions.

First of all, there have been a lot of definitions about prayer due to various prayer styles and contents. Even though prayers in the history of Christianity have been a complicated variety, they have a family resemblance. No Christian can deny that all prayers consist of pray-er as a subject and God as an object. The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation explains that prayer is a communication with God through thoughts, words, and gestures whereby we express what we believe about God and our relationship to God and to one another.¹ Young-Bong Kim insists that prayer is not an asking but a facing with God and a fellowship with God.² Andy Dreitcer says,

I would say that prayer is an intentional “communication/communion” between Oneself and God. Or, more accurately, in prayer God and I are mutually and intentionally offering something of ourselves to one another and receiving

¹ Patricia D. Brown, “Prayer,” in The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation, ed. Keith Beasley-Topliffe (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003), 223.

² Young-Bong Kim, Sagyumeui Kido (Prayer as Fellowship with God) (Seoul: Hankookkidokkyo Student Books, 2002), 31.

something of ourselves from one another (whether we pray-ers experience this receiving or not) – and that offering comes in a variety of ways.³

According to these three definitions of prayer, another family resemblance of prayer is communication. Therefore, there are three family resemblances in prayer, namely, pray-er, God, and communication. A subject of the communication is a Christian or God, and an object of the communication is God or a Christian. A Christian tries to communicate with God through prayer to receive something depending upon their interest such as a solving a problem, a thanksgiving, a repentance, a blessing, a peaceful mind, and a praising. God also is communicating to humans in prayer. It is a two-way communication, in which both can be subject or object. However, without the presence of God, facing God, or communication with God, a prayer is not a true prayer. Therefore, I would like to define prayer as a spiritual communication between God and oneself to receive something through an experience of the presence of God.

On the other hand, contemplation has changed its connotation depending upon era and theologians. There have been two lines in the history; one is a secular denotation of contemplation, the other is a sacred sense of contemplation. First, from a secular historical perspective, we can see the meaning of contemplation from the Greek philosopher, Aristotle. Aristotle explains contemplation as a highly achieved intellectual activity in relation to virtue in his ethics.⁴ It is not related to a religious effort. Heidegger understood Aristotle's meaning of "contemplative" as a meaning of "philosophical" or

³ Andrew Dreitcer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," (MS 342), introduction to the course, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA, Spring 2002.

⁴ Harold H. Joachim, Aristotle, the Nicomachean Ethics: A Commentary, ed. D. A. Rees (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 206.

“speculative.”⁵ Many philosophers regard contemplation as the end of speculative activity.

However, from a sacred historical perspective, one can see the developments of the conceptualizing of contemplation. In the Desert tradition, the Desert Fathers used the term of contemplation as a focused attention of the soul on God to reach toward God itself. They focused on contemplative prayer to be in union with God, a Christian perfection. Augustine defines that contemplation is a special moment when the soul enters into an intimate and loving union with God not by its own efforts but by God’s grace.⁶

In the sixteenth century, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross developed the concept of contemplation in detail. They distinguished the concept of contemplation by two different features: acquired contemplation and infused contemplation. Acquired contemplation is an active spiritual effortness toward God by being besieged by divine power with an intellectual power. One can call it a meditation. On the other hand, infused contemplation is a state of mystical union with God without an active approach to God in which oneself is completely surrendered to God and effortless.⁷ The Orthodox spirituality has the same idea. The orthodox spirituality defines contemplation as below:

Contemplation is *acquired* if the acts of contemplation are the results of personal effort. It is *infused* if these acts are produced by divine grace without, or almost without, human effort. Acquired contemplation belongs to the ascetical life. Infused contemplation belongs to the mystical life.⁸

⁵ William McNeill, The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 18.

⁶ Amy Sturdivant Jennings, “Contemplation,” in The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation, ed. Keith Beasley-Topliffe (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003), 67.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁸ A Monk of the Eastern Church, “The Essentials of Orthodox Spirituality,” in Exploring Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Reader, ed. Kenneth J. Collins (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 112.

It seems to me that the distinction of contemplation shows that infused contemplation is a higher contemplation. According to Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, only few can experience the state of infused contemplation because infused contemplation is an absolute passive state in which our soul is committed to God's will definitely.

However Thomas Merton insists that contemplation can occur in any Christian. He proposes that contemplation is the highest expression of man's intellectual and spiritual life. It is that life itself, fully awake, fully active, fully aware that it is alive. It is a spiritual wonder.⁹ He tries to define contemplation through a negative way in which he asks what contemplation is not.¹⁰

Andy Dreitcer suggests that contemplation can be clarified by using other terms like contemplative state, contemplative spirituality, contemplative awareness, contemplative attitude, or contemplative listening. He defines contemplative state as a state of contemplation in which one is effortlessly being caught up in the presence of God.¹¹

Even though the definition of contemplation has been changed slowly over the years by spiritual leaders, the connotation of contemplation is an experience of the presence of God in relation to a state of our soul's union with God by being caught by divine power passively. Therefore, a contemplative prayer is a spiritual communication between God and oneself who is caught up by God beyond one's own effort.

⁹ Thomas Merton, New Seeds of Contemplation (New York: New Directions, 1961), 1..

¹⁰ Ibid., 6-13.

¹¹ Dreitcer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," apophatic-centering-background material.

Apophatic and Kataphatic Prayer

An analytical overview of the contemplative prayers in the history of Christian spirituality serves to clarify salient theological characteristics and an importance of contemplative prayer in the history of Christianity. Contemplative prayer is the most important and influential prayer among the prayer traditions of Christianity. There have been various prayer traditions in the history of Christian spirituality such as prayer in Jesus' life, prayer in the desert tradition, Jesus prayer tradition, praying with icons, lectio divina, centering prayer, praying with imagination, praying along the way, praying with movement, prayer with environment, and praying for petition. However, the end of all prayer is the same. Living in the presence of God is the goal of all prayer practices; however, the way of reaching the goal is different.

Fully experiencing the presence of God means the union between Christian and God. Fully experiencing the presence of God has been expressed as two features: nothing-ness and fullness.¹² Contemplative prayer is to pursue a state of contemplation in which one is effortlessly being caught up in the presence of God. In contemplation, being with God effortlessly, the end of the prayer can be reached by the apophatic way or the kataphatic way. Even though most scholars and practitioners of Christian prayer recognize that there is no pure form of either the apophatic prayer or the kataphatic prayer,¹³ one can categorize the apophatic way and the kataphatic way as two kinds of contemplative prayer through the techniques employed in each way. The apophatic way is the way of negation of concepts, symbols, feelings, and senses in an approach toward God. John Cassian is one of the important early church monks who sought the apophatic

¹² Dreitcer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," Ignatian-image prayer class outline.

¹³ Dreitcer, apophatic-centering, background material, 2.

way to reach the contemplative state. Lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing in the 13th century British tradition are well known apophatic prayers. Their final goal of the prayer is a state of nothingness in which one can be in union with God definitely.

On the other hand, the kataphatic way is the way of attempting to approach God through intellectual, emotional, sensory, and visual methods. The kataphatic way seeks to reach a state of fullness, a positive state of experience of the presence of God. Ignatius of Loyola is well known as a famous practitioner of the kataphatic prayer. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that the apophatic and kataphatic ways have some similarities in terms of the importance of preparation before the formal time of prayer, the emphasis on discretion to reach the end of the spiritual journey, and the end of prayer. I will discuss the different philosophical and theological backgrounds and characteristics between the apophatic prayer and the kataphatic prayer. Also, I will point out that the apophatic way and the kataphatic way are not contrasting ways to accomplish a contemplative state, in which one can have a mystical joy being caught up in the presence of God beyond one's own effort. Rather, the apophatic way and the kataphatic way are mutual supplementary ways to go toward God.

The Philosophical and Theological Background of the Apophatic Prayer

The apophatic way to pray is called a negative way toward God through silence, darkness, passivity without imagery, thought, concept, and emotion. The principal of the apophatic way includes the difference of quality between God and us, God's transcendent, and inaccessibility to God by our intellectual concepts. This means that there is a

hierarchical level between God and a human being, and a human being has a spiritual willingness toward God by the purpose of God's creation. But a human being does not have the ability to go toward God by its own capacity. It is a negative evaluation of creation or a human being. I think that this teleological scheme came from Platonism. According to Plato's ontology, the world is divided as an intelligible world and a sensible world. An intelligible world consists of Forms and Mathematical objects. This intelligible world is a certain world. On the other hand, a sensible world can be divided into physical objects and images. This world is not infallible.¹⁴ A human being pursues the highest level of the world by nature. As with his ontology, Plato distinguishes the levels of knowledge such as "illusion," "belief," "mathematical reason," "intelligence," and "knowledge of the Form of the Good."¹⁵ Plato explains human knowledge through the parable of a cave in relation to the levels of knowledge. Illusion is like prisoners bound in the cave looking at shadows of puppets. Belief is like prisoners freed in the cave seeing the puppets and the fire. Mathematical reason is like seeing shadows and reflections of objects outside the cave. Intelligence is like looking directly at objects outside the cave. Finally, knowledge of the Form of the Good is like looking directly at the sun.¹⁶ Plato's teleological ontology and epistemology affected all eras of the western world, especially early Christianity. Plato pursues not a sensory world but an intellectual world because he wants to attain certain knowledge and an infallible state.

Neo-Platonism succeeded Platonism, although there were some changes of the ontological scheme. Plotinus, the most famous neo-Platonist, received the theory of

¹⁴ Sean Sayers, Plato's Republic: An Introduction (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 123.

¹⁵ Ibid., 127.

¹⁶ Ibid., 125-27.

platonic ontological levels, namely, transcendent levels of reality and a visible universe. However, Plotinus developed the theory of relationship between ontological levels.

Apophatic prayer is related to the ontology of neo-Platonism. Plotinus insists that the lower stages in the ontological levels of reality “flow from the higher ones through the necessary nontemporal process of procession or emanation and return through conversion.”¹⁷ Apophatic prayer is related to the notion in transcendental theology that we can not go toward God through our intellectual power, conceptual understanding, imaginative faculty, emotional feeling, and physical entity. Rather, according to transcendental theology, we can go toward God through only silence, darkness, thoughtlessness, passivity and the absence of imagery because God is beyond thought, image, and the sensory world. Therefore, apophatic prayer has a background of Platonism and transcendental theology in its understanding of God and human beings.

The Philosophical and Theological Background of the Kataphatic Prayer

The kataphatic way to pray is called a positive way toward God through imagery, thought, concept, and emotion. The principal of the kataphatic way includes the notion that even though there is the difference of quality between God and the human being, God reveals his or her nature into the world and the human being. That means that the human being has a faculty for movement toward God through its own ability. First of all, the ontology of Aristotle can be a background of the kataphatic way toward God because Aristotle holds a concept of immanent realism in opposition to Plato’s transcendental realism. Even though Aristotle insists on the teleological scheme of the world, he

¹⁷ Bernard McGinn, The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, v. 1. (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1994), 46.

explains that a substance is an individual thing. This means that the essence of an individual thing is not related to the transcendental realm, but an individual thing has its own essence in it.

Thomas Aquinas succeeded Aristotle's ontology to apply it into his theology. Following Aristotle's ontology, Aquinas emphasizes an end. Aquinas mentions that every agent acts for an end, and every agent acts for a good.¹⁸ The entire order of creatures derives from a single cause and tends towards a single end. This means that all creatures are ordered toward God as to their last end. Also all things attain to their last end in terms of their participation in God.¹⁹ Therefore, the last end of an intellectual creature is to know God. Furthermore, nothing can fully satisfy the human will except the universal good. No creature can substitute for God and the last end. Therefore, human beatitude consists in God alone, as in the first and universal good, and the source of all other goods. The essence itself of the beatitude can be considered as an act of intellect.²⁰ Without a will toward God and the last end, we cannot get happiness and salvation. Both knowledge and will toward God are necessary for human salvation. Furthermore, O'Meara points out that Aquinas describes human life as a journey. In order to know our destiny, we need revelation because destiny is beyond our knowledge. If human life is a journey to a final end, Jesus is the source of grace for our pilgrimage and the model of living. Also, even if there had been no Fall, we would need revelation

¹⁸ Thomas Aquinas, Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, vol. 2, Man and the Conduct of Life: Summa Contra Gentiles, ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Random House, 1945), 5-8.

¹⁹ Etienne Gilson, The Philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas, ed. G. A. Elrington, trans. Edward Bullough, from 3rd rev. ed. (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1929), 337.

²⁰ Thomas Aquinas, Basic Writings, 47.

and grace for the journey to a destiny which is far beyond our power to attain.²¹ These explanations show the importance of the teleological structure of Aquinas' theology.

Even though Aquinas follows a teleological understanding of the world like Platonism, he emphasizes incarnational theology to explain the union with God. Aquinas developed the doctrine that the incarnation is a teleologically necessary condition for human salvation. Aquinas does not only take satisfaction for sin as the important role of the incarnation, but also argues that it was necessary for the restoration of the human race that the Word of God should become incarnate.²² Incarnation was necessary for human salvation. Aquinas says that salvation is not only liberation from sin but also gracious reunion with God.²³

Also, in relation to neo-Platonism, theologically, Plotinus' theory of ontology can be interpreted in a manner that supports incarnational theology: God reveals his essence to nature by natural revelation and Jesus Christ by special revelation, and all creatures ought to return toward God. This means that human beings can understand God through nature and Jesus Christ, and can go toward God for union with the unconceivable God. Namely, the kataphatic prayer is related to immanent and incarnational theology in that we can reach God through this sensory world because God reveals God's nature to our thought, our image, and our sensory world. Thus, Philip Sheldrake insists that in the distinction between the two streams of spirituality, the degree of Christocentrism is more accurate rather than an apophatic-kataphatic distinction because the main streams of

²¹ Thomas F. O'Meara, "Thomas Aquinas and Today's Theology," *Theology Today* 55 (April 1998): 53.

²² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 5 vols. (New York: Benziger Bros, 1948; reprint, Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), III q.1, a.1.

²³ *Ibid.*, III q.1, a.2.

spirituality can be distinguished as the emphasis on the humanity of Jesus and the stress on world-transcending view or the experience of God as the Other.²⁴

However, it seems to me that the distinction of the apophatic way and the kataphatic way is good enough to see the main streams of spirituality because all spiritual practices and theologians cannot be distinguished as Christ-centered spirituality and transcendental God-centered spirituality exactly. Rather, it seems to me that we have to clarify that in what context apophatic way of prayer is emphasized. Also, we have to find the theological and philosophical background in which kataphatic prayer is stressed. I think that a form of prayer is determined by its periodic cultural, theological, philosophical, social background. God is not only in the human world, human thought, and image but also beyond our world and concept. God asks us what the best way toward God is in our situation.

The Background of Monasticism

Almost all contemplative prayers are related to the monastic tradition which influences great spiritual leaders. Therefore, understanding monasticism is necessary to clarify the features of contemplative prayer.

In relation to the political, cultural, and social context of early monasticism, the acceptance of Christianity by the Roman Empire was the most important turning point. The victory of Christianity made a secularization of the Church. Also, it meant the end of the persecutions and martyrdom. Before the victory of Christianity, many Christians fled to avoid martyrdom and went to the desert to keep their faith. There were various kinds of ascetical characteristics especially in Egypt. There were many individual hermits,

²⁴ Sheldrake, 197.

eremitical monks, and some cenobitic²⁵ communities in Egypt. I think that these were pre-monastic features. However, monasticism needs two important elements: community and rule. The secularization of the Church by the acceptance of Christianity by the Roman Empire accelerated monasticism. There were a lot of people escaping from Roman Christian society and joining the monastic communities and following their spiritual rules. People who thought that there was no true Christian faith within the secularized Christian society withdrew themselves from the Christian Roman world.

However, the first reason why early Christians escaped from the Roman Empire was clear. The persecution of Christianity by the Roman government caused many Christians to leave their home and go to the desert area in Egypt and Syria to keep their true Christian faiths. This means that in the formation of early monasticism, monasticism in the Eastern Church was more powerful and earlier than the Western church. The book, Life of Antony, generally accepted as the work of Athanasius, and Pachomian materials, give us a perspective of the first features of early monastic movements in the Eastern Church.

Anthony, Pachomius, Basil, and the other Eastern monks emphasized a strict ascetical norm and the withdrawal from the secular world. Also, they stressed the monastic life following each regulation. Western monasticism had the similar ascetical characteristics, because the forms of Western monasticism most likely flowed from Eastern monasticism. However, it is difficult to find the exact trace of the origin and the development of early monasticism. Nevertheless, every monastic movement and community had a strict ascetical attitude to reach the higher spiritual goal.

²⁵ Cenobitic monasticism is a monastic tradition that stresses community life.

In the philosophical context, various thoughts affected directly or indirectly the birth of the movement to seek individual spiritual life in the Christian movement.

Anthony Meredith points out the thoughts that have some similar characteristics with the early monastic community such as Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, Wisdom literature, and Gnosticism.²⁶ Especially, the terms and language, such as *idea* (Plato), *life of contemplation* (Aristotle), *apatheia* (Stoicism), and *transcend* (neo-Platonism, Philo, Plotinus), affected the formation of the monastic idea directly or indirectly.

In the religious context, it seems that there were two basic elements to develop monasticism from the first century to the fourth century. During the Roman persecution, Christian faith could not help but emphasize the second coming of Jesus. The suppressed Christians' expectation of an imminent end of the world made a severe ascetical faith. People who contributed themselves to the Christian faith had ascetical attitudes. They gathered together and shared their faith and expectation for the imminent coming of Christ. Their gathering seemed to be pre-monastic. After acceptance of Christianity by the Roman Empire, monasticism replaced the martyrdom of Roman persecution. More exactly, ascetical practices such as chastity, humbleness, and suppression of desire were the most important values in the Church. There was no actual persecution after the mid-fourth century. Before the victory of Christianity, the most valuable and faithful thing was martyrdom. However, after the end of persecution, Christians needed another value for their faith that could replace martyrdom. Ascetical attitudes in monasticism became an alternative. This is a reason why monasticism could develop rapidly after the victory of Christianity in the Roman world.

²⁶ Anthony Meredith, "Philosophical Roots: Greek Philosophy, Wisdom Literature and Gnosis," in *The Study of Spirituality*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 90-94.

Some scholars insist that the *Katachoi*, *Essenes* or *Therapeutae* were one of the earliest monastic communities in the Eastern world. Weingarten assumed that Anthony and Pachomius had a contact at the Temple that was the institution of the *Katachoi*.²⁷ However, even though they had some characteristics similar to monasticism, they were not the origin of monasticism because there are some major differences between them and monasticism after the fourth century.²⁸

As a faithful community, monasticism requires strict rules to devote its life to accomplishing Christian perfection and union with God. One of the most important rules is a strictly regulated prayer life.

Five Important Different Contemplative Prayer Traditions

I chose five important different contemplative prayers in the history of Christianity in order to clarify the features of contemplative prayer in relation to the apophatic way and the kataphatic way. I will review Cassian's prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition as the characteristics of the apophatic prayer. Also I will review Ignatius of Loyola's imaginative prayer in relation to kataphatic prayer.

Cassian's Prayer in the Desert Father's Tradition

Cassian's prayer is a well known prayer which influenced the Western and Eastern Early churches. Cassian's prayer especially shows the core features of the Desert

²⁷ Timothy Fry, ed., RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981), 5.

²⁸ Ibid., 6.

Fathers' various prayers. John Cassian (360-435), was a Christian monk of the Desert Fathers who fled to the deserts of Egypt and Syria to live as hermits who devoted themselves to accomplishing Christian perfection and union with God. John Cassian joined a monastery in Bethlehem, but soon left and traveled through the desert to interview the hermits, recording what he learned.²⁹ Two conferences with Isaac are the most important materials used to clarify the concept of Cassian's prayer.

John Cassian is known as the most famous theologian in the apophatic prayer. He seem to be a seeker who pursued the presence of God without thoughts, feelings and sense data. However, it seems to me that Cassian does not deny the kataphatic way to approach God. Cassian emphasizes the apophatic way to go toward God more strongly. John Cassian suggests three renunciations for our spiritual journey. Mary Margaret Funk summarizes these three renunciations as follows:

First, we must renounce our former way of life and move closer to our heart's desire, toward the interior life. Second, we must do the inner work by renouncing our mindless thoughts. This renunciation is particularly difficult because we have little control over our thoughts. Third, we must renounce our own images of God so that we can enter into contemplation of God as God.³⁰

Through this paragraph, one can understand Cassian's teleological thought about the approach to God. Cassian's position of the way to go toward God seems to be the apophatic way, but he does not deny the kataphatic way. Following the neo-Platonic ontological level, Cassian pursues the highest level, the union with God. His goal of life is contemplation. Contemplation is accomplished by purity of heart and incessant prayer. Therefore, purity of soul and continuous prayer are the goal of spiritual life. According

²⁹ William O. Paulsell, Rules for Prayer (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 10.

³⁰ Mary Margaret Funk, Thoughts Matter: The Practice of the Spiritual Life (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1998), 9.

to Cassian, perfection in the spiritual life cannot be separated from incessant prayer.³¹

Purity of heart is the same as the oneness with God created by continuous prayer.

Cassian emphasizes the importance of internal disposition of prayer. This internal disposition is related to virtue.

Levko points out that “prayer in faith-filled confidence is intimately connected for Cassian with developing a God-centered internal disposition based on the virtues.”³² This means that incessant prayer and purity of heart are not given in a moment. Human beings can reach contemplation through a gradual process with good virtues toward God.

Cassian says that in order to enter a spiritual life, we have to renounce the secular life style. Furthermore, Cassian holds that in order for a gradual participation in God, we have to renounce thoughts that control us. We also need good virtues for purity of heart.

Levko clarifies Cassian’s three dispositions for good prayer. First, Cassian regards growth in humility and patience as growth in prayer to provide for the inward tranquility of heart.³³ The virtue of patience is one of the most important internal dispositions for growth in peace of heart. Second, Cassian emphasizes struggle against sin. In order to struggle against temptation, we need two things. One is the grace of discretion. Without the grace of discretion, we cannot discern between good and evil spirits.³⁴ The other is perseverance in prayer. Without the persistent recollection of God and spiritual meditation, “no man, except our Lord and Saviour, can keep his naturally wandering mind.”³⁵ Recollection of God and short prayer are good ways to struggle against temptation. I think that prayer using Psalms and short passages or meditation on

³¹ Levko, 5.

³² Ibid., 4.

³³ Ibid., 27.

³⁴ Ibid., 33.

³⁵ Ibid., 35.

passages of the Scripture is a kind of kataphatic prayer. In this meaning, for Cassian, kataphatic prayer is a powerful method to go toward incessant prayer and purity of heart, namely, contemplation, although the kataphatic way cannot reach the highest level, contemplation. Third, Cassian emphasizes control of thoughts, feelings, and passions. This is related to the second renunciation. Without self-control, we cannot go toward purity of heart, namely, *apatheia*. These three virtues for good prayer lead us to incessant prayer. After all, for Cassian, pure prayer is the goal of our spiritual life. We can attain the contemplation through the renunciation of all earthly things, including thoughts, feelings, and passions. William Paulsell shows that Abba Isaac listed four kinds of prayers:

1. Supplication: prayer for the pardon of sins
2. Prayers: prayer that vows to serve God with the whole heart
3. Intercessions: prayers for others
4. Thanksgivings: prayer offered when the mind recollects what God has done or is doing.³⁶

We can see the level of the prayer toward God. Our spiritual life grows from self to a union with God. Cassian's prayer is an apophatic prayer because his prayer pursues perfection of prayer through renouncing concepts, emotions, and passions. Contemplation, purity of heart, and incessant prayer are given by negative ways to get rid of describable entities. However, since Cassian accepts the gradual process toward contemplation, the final goal, we cannot deny a usefulness of kataphatic prayer in Cassian's prayer. Also, Cassian's prayer is related to actual spiritual life because he emphasizes the virtues of internal disposition. Nevertheless, Cassian relies on the apophatic way toward God because his philosophical background is neo-Platonic ontology that insists that our thought and sense cannot understand and grasp a

³⁶ Paulsell, 11.

transcendental God beyond sensory world. One can call Cassian's theology as a negative theology that emphasizes the transcendence of God. He insists that since we cannot understand and grasp God through our concept, image, and sense, we have to get rid of these values.

Lectio Divina in the Benedictine Tradition

Benedict of Nursia was born about the year 480 when the Roman Empire in the West had been overrun by so-called barbarians. During his life, he had spent a lot of time serving and building monasteries before being driven out by an unholy priest in the area. He immigrated with a few of his monks to Monte Cassino. There he spent his last seventeen years or so establishing his monastery and composing his Rule for monks.³⁷ Even though he is known as a founder of Western monasticism, he was influenced by John Cassian and the Eastern Desert tradition. This means that Benedict stands on the tradition of the apophatic way of the contemplative prayer. Since life in the community is essential for Benedict, he composed the rule for monastery.³⁸ For Benedict, the life of the community was to be a cycle of prayer, reading, and manual labor. In the Benedictine tradition, praying with the Holy Scripture is the most important piece of the schedule in the monastery.

Lectio means "reading", and divina connotes "holy" or "divine." Lectio divina is an essential element in the flowering of contemplation, because it seeks to accomplish a mystical meeting with God in the text which is a state being caught up in the presence of

³⁷ Placid Spearritt, "Benedict," in The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 149.

³⁸ George A. Lane, Christian Spirituality: An Historical Sketch (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984), 20-21.

God effortlessly. However, we can not expect a spiritual union with God instantly. A simple scheme of the spiritual progressive movement comes from Guigo II, who wrote a brief treatise called *The Ladder of Monks* that shows how to go into contemplation from a holy reading. Guigo II is exactly within the stream of the Benedictine monastery tradition. William O. Paulsell summarizes like this:

The Ladder of Monks lists four progressive activities for spiritual growth. The first rung on the ladder is the *reading* of scripture. After we have read a passage and noticed that there might be more meaning than what we immediately see on the surface, we ascend to the second rung which is *meditation*. This involves pondering the passage we have read, turning it over in our minds and trying to draw deeper meaning from it. Meditation leads us to the third rung, *prayer*. Having read and meditated on the passage we are moved to pray about it, asking God to help us attain for our lives the point the passage teaches. Finally, we ascend to the fourth rung of the ladder, which is *contemplation*. At this stage, God, responding to our reading, meditation, and prayer, comes to meet us and fulfills our longing for the divine presence.³⁹

The four movements of *lectio divina* in the Benedictine tradition are introduced by Guigo II. Michael Casey categorizes the four levels as four different realms.⁴⁰ The first stage of the *lectio divina* is *Lectio* which is for understanding the text by intellectual faculty to grasp a literal denotation. The second stage of the *lectio divina* progresses through *Meditatio* which is for contextualizing the meaning of the text by memory faculty to perceive Christological connotation. The third step of the *lectio divina* is *Oratio* which is for living the meaning of the text by conscience faculty to reach a behavioral sense. The last stage of the *lectio divina* is *Contemplatio* which is for meeting God in the text by spiritual faculty to accomplish a mystical comprehension. The final goal of the *lectio divina* in Benedictine tradition is to reach a contemplative state which is no-thing-ness being caught by the presence of God. This means that *lectio divina* is the apophatic

³⁹ Paulsell, 131.

⁴⁰ Michael Casey, *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* (Liguori, MO: Triumph Books, 1996), 57.

prayer even though it starts with reading the Bible like Ignatius of Loyola. I will compare lectio divina in Benedictine tradition with an imaginative prayer of Ignatius of Loyola later.

Jesus Prayer in the Orthodox Tradition

The Jesus prayer is a continually-used monologistic prayer made by using short, simple, repetitious, biblical-based words. Since the Jesus prayer has developed and been sustained through centuries, there have been many versions of prayer in the tradition. No one can deny that the Jesus prayer has its roots in the biblical verses, and the monastic tradition in the Eastern church developed this prayer into the various versions. In the Eastern desert tradition, “(Lord) Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me (a sinner)” is one version of the prayer, which comes from the biblical phrases “Jesus, Son of David have mercy on me” (the blind man in Luke 18:38) and “God be merciful to me, a sinner” (the tax collector in the parable around Luke 18:13).⁴¹

Ken Kaisch points out four elements of Jesus prayer.⁴² He insists that the roots of the first element of the Jesus prayer are related to the divine power of the name of Jesus Christ. From the early church, devotion to the name of Jesus has been a part of the church. Also he gives two examples. The first is from St. Paul in Philippians 2:9-10, “God ... bestowed on Him the name above every other name, so that at Jesus’ name, every knee must bend in the heavens, and on the earth, and under the earth.” The second is from St. John’s Gospel in John 16:23, “Whatever you ask the Father, he will give you in my name.” So in the Jesus prayer there has to be the name of Jesus Christ. The second

⁴¹ Dreitcer, class materials, “Prayer Traditions,” desert-Jesus prayer.

⁴² Kaisch, 194-95.

element of the Jesus prayer is a petition to God for God's grace and forgiveness like the words, "Have mercy on me." The third element, the frequent repetition of the prayer, pursues a constant prayer without ceasing. The last element is a contemplative prayer in which one can reach inner stillness through the no-thing-ness of rejecting concepts.

The Jesus prayer can be sketched by three degrees; oral or bodily prayer, prayer of the mind, and prayer of the heart or spiritual prayer. In the oral or bodily prayer degree, one prays "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me (a sinner)" repetitiously with mouth to focus on the meaning of what is being said. When the oral prayer is repeated over and over, it moves toward the mental or mind prayer in which the words with mouth becomes less important, and in which the words and meaning is deepened in one's mind. However, the prayer is continued in one's mind without ceasing. The third degree is a spiritual prayer which has to move toward imagelessness and thoughtlessness to be a prayer of heart in which one can experience a contemplative state without images, thoughts, and passions. St. Theophan the Recluse, a major figure in Russian mysticism in the nineteenth century shows prayer of heart like this:

In order to keep the mind on one thing by the use of a short prayer, it is necessary to preserve attention and so lead it into the heart: for so long as the mind remains in the head, where thoughts jostle one another, it has no time to concentrate on one thing. But when attention descends into the heart, it attracts all the powers of the soul and body into one point there. This concentration of all human life in one place is immediately reflected in the heart by a special sensation that is the beginning of future warmth... This warmth then holds the attention without special effort... From this there follows a rule of spiritual life: if you keep the heart alive towards God, you will always be in remembrance of God.⁴³

According to this explanation, in the prayer of heart, one can have special feelings, spiritual feelings, or deep affections unlike ordinary life feelings. These feelings are not a physical or emotional approach toward God. The final stage of the Jesus prayer is a

⁴³ Kaisch, 198, citing I. Chariton, *The Art of Prayer* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), 94.

prayer without any thoughts, emotions, feelings, and images. Since the Jesus prayer moves from mouth to mind to heart, there includes thoughts, images, and emotions, the final stage is an ultimate stillness, a contemplation in the apophatic prayer.

The Cloud of Unknowing

Like John Cassian, the author of The Cloud of Unknowing is known as the most famous theologian in the apophatic prayer. He seems to be a seeker who pursues the presence of God without thoughts, feelings and sense data. The author of The Cloud of Unknowing emphasizes only the apophatic way of reaching God without thought and imagery. The Cloud of Unknowing is a stronger apophatic way than other apophatic traditions.

The Cloud of Unknowing was written by an anonymous author in fourteenth-century England. The unique theology of The Cloud of Unknowing determines the strong apophatic way of prayer. The author of the book distinguishes two types of the power approach to God. One is the power of knowing, and the other is the power of love.⁴⁴ The author says,

All rational creatures, angels and men alike, have in them, each one individually, one chief working power, which is called a knowing power, and another chief working power called a loving power; and of these two powers, God, who is the maker of them, is always incomprehensible to the first, the knowing power. But to the second, which is the loving power, He is entirely comprehensible in each one individually, in so much that one loving soul of itself, because of love, would be able to comprehend Him who is entirely sufficient... to fill all the souls of men and angels that could ever exist. This is the everlasting wonderful miracle of love, which shall never have an end.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid., 221.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 221, citing James Walsh, ed., The Cloud of Unknowing (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 123.

The author insists that intellectual knowing is an insufficient way to know God. God can be approached only through the power of love. According to The Cloud of Unknowing, in order to know God, we have to give up our intellectual knowing power. This abandonment is accomplished by establishing the cloud of unknowing. The cloud of unknowing between God and a human being is a darkness. This darkness reveals the limitation of the intellectual power to know God. The author postulates the cloud of forgetting to move to the love of God. The cloud of forgetting helps a human being to abandon its past intellectual understanding of God. The author says,

Whenever I say “all the creatures that have ever been made,” I mean not only the creatures themselves, but also all their works and circumstances. I make no exceptions, whether they are bodily creatures or spiritual, nor for the state or activity of any creatures, whether these be good or evil. In short, I say that all should be hid under the cloud of forgetting.⁴⁶

The author insists that through the creature’s thoughts, concepts, senses, and feelings, the creature cannot know God. Furthermore, this forgetting includes a human being’s own sin because the sin could interfere with a human being’s active love of God. After all, through abandonment of the intellectual approach toward God and forgetting of the sin, we can get the love of God, the loving power. It seems to me that the theology of *The Cloud of Unknowing* emphasizes the transcendence of God and unconceivable Divinity through our thought, image, and sense. As Clifton Wolters suggests, in *the Cloud of Unknowing*, contemplation is not the pleasant reaction to a celestial sunset, nor is it the perpetual twitter of heavenly birdsong. It is not even an emotion. It is the

⁴⁶ Ibid., 222-23, citing Walsh, ed., Cloud of Unknowing, 128.

awareness of God, known and loved at the core of one's being. No description of the bliss of contemplation is possible: its nature is such that it is unspeakable.⁴⁷

Louis Dupre and James Wiseman insist that the philosophical root of The Cloud of Unknowing is Plotinus and Proclus, and the theological root is a synthesis between Dionysius's negative theology and the love mysticism of Bernard.⁴⁸ Teleological ontology and radical negative theology make the strict apophatic way of prayer toward God.

Ignatius of Loyola's Prayer in the Kataphatic Style

In the sixteenth century, the founder of the Jesuit, Ignatius of Loyola, developed a system of contemplative prayer called the *Spiritual Exercise*. He designed spiritual formation retreats which can be done as a 30 day retreat, an 8 day retreat, or as a retreat in daily life. He led people to pray through the life and ministry of Jesus from Bible stories with imagination of the story. Thus imagination is the most important content of his prayer. His prayer is a kataphatic prayer because he does not abandon thoughts, images, and feelings. However, since contemplation is when the images that have come to oneself take over your prayer, namely, when the images are praying you beyond your conscious awareness of them, Ignatian prayer is a contemplative prayer.⁴⁹ Since Ignatian prayer is the only kataphatic prayer among these five contemplative prayers I chose, I will compare and contrast Ignatian prayer with Cassian's prayer, which is a root of apophatic prayer, to clarify those characteristics.

⁴⁷ The Cloud of Unknowing, trans. into Modern English with an introduction by Clifton Wolters (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), 36-37.

⁴⁸ Dupre, 248-49.

⁴⁹ Dreitzer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," Ignatian-image prayer.

Even though both Cassian's prayer and Ignatius' prayer are called contemplative prayers, there are differences in terms of the methods of prayer, the use of the Bible and the different expression of being with God. First of all, the methods and techniques of Cassian's prayer and Ignatius' prayer depend upon their theology. Cassian's prayer is related to a negative theology, which means that we can go toward God through silence, darkness, thoughtlessness, passivity, and the absence of imagery because God is beyond thought, image, and the sensory world. Thus Cassian's apophatic prayer pursues the presence of God without thoughts, feelings, and the senses. Cassian's emphasis on the renunciations of desires, mindless thoughts, and our images of God is an evidence of his negative theology.⁵⁰ Platonism and Asceticism form the most important theoretical background of Cassian's negative theology. Platonism insists that in order to achieve the certain knowledge and infallible state, one has to pursue not the sensory world but what is beyond the sensory world. Also, asceticism insists that in order to go toward the spiritual world, one has to pursue not earthly values but heavenly treasures. One has to abandon one's bodily pleasure to experience the true presence of God in one's life. Both Platonism and asceticism deny the value of the bodily senses and of fallible visible things.

Ignatius' prayer, on the other hand, is kataphatic prayer, and so it is related to incarnational theology. Incarnational theology insists that God the creator reveals his love and essence through nature and the life of Jesus Christ. This means that human beings can go toward God through our thoughts, imaginations, emotions, and the senses because God fully reveals God's nature and love to our sensory world through nature and Jesus Christ. Also, we can trace the background of Ignatius' kataphatic prayer through his life. According to Michael Ivens, "Ignatius underwent a profound spiritual crisis as

⁵⁰ Funk, 9.

the result of reading two books: The Life of Christ, by Ludolph of Saxony and The Golden Legend, a work of hagiology,”⁵¹ while recovering from a wound.⁵² These two books led Ignatius to Christ-centered prayer and a strict holy life style. Also, he learned the poetry of courtly love and of Christian devotion.⁵³ It seems to me that poetry affected Ignatius’ imaginative prayer. Ignatius provides application of the senses to spiritual exercises to assist Christians in experiencing the presence of God. Especially, the imagining of the life of Jesus Christ is a powerful way to reach contemplation. James Walsh insists that Ignatius emphasizes a perfect understanding of one’s own senses by experiencing how the incarnate Word uses such as feeling, looking, hearing, touching, and tasting.⁵⁴ Ignatian contemplation is in imaginative presence of Jesus. While Cassian’s apophatic prayer uses renunciation of imagination and thought as the method of prayer, Ignatius’ kataphatic prayer uses imagination and thought to reach a contemplative state.

Second, both Cassian and Ignatius emphasized use of the Scripture for their prayer, but their purposes for using the Bible differ slightly. Cassian uses the Scripture as a material assistant to help nourish and nurture the soul for growth in the perfection of prayer and going toward God. Cassian emphasizes the process of prayer. In order to keep the process of prayer toward a God-centered disposition for pure prayer, one needs fuel such as Scripture and good thoughts.⁵⁵ For Cassian, the Bible is one of the important tools to encourage the prayer practice for growth in the perfection of prayer. The

⁵¹ Hagiology is literature about the lives and legends of saints.

⁵² Michael Ivens, “Ignatius Loyola,” in The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 358.

⁵³ Joseph A. Tetlow, Ignatius Loyola: Spiritual Exercises (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 19.

⁵⁴ James Walsh, “Application of the Senses,” The Way, Supplement no. 27, Spring 1976, 64.

⁵⁵ Levko, 67.

continual nourishment from Scripture helps to maintain the feature of spiritual growth.⁵⁶

It seems to me that for Cassian's prayer, the Bible is a tool to keep one's inner capacity and good disposition toward contemplation. For Cassian, even though scripture helps one to go toward pure prayer and incessant prayer, one should renounce the imagining of the Bible story and the scene of Jesus' life because the final goal of prayer is a state of no-thing-ness.

Scripture is also a part of prayer in Ignatius' prayer. The highlight of Ignatius' spiritual exercise is to reflect and to imagine Jesus' life story from the Scripture. Jesus' life story is the main content in his prayer practice. The imagining of each scene of Jesus' life story in the Bible can be a contemplative prayer. In this case, the Bible is not a tool but the content of contemplative prayer. Ignatius uses the process of *lectio divina*, but with imagination.

Third, the core dissimilarity between Cassian's prayer and Ignatius' prayer is the expression of the presence of God, the goal of prayer. Cassian expresses the state of contemplation as no-thing-ness. Apophatic prayer renounces everything, thus the final state should be no-thing-ness. No-thing-ness is the state of incessant prayer and pure prayer. Since union with God is beyond senses and concepts, one can express the presence of God only through the word, "no-thing-ness." Therefore, according to Cassian's apophatic prayer, a contemplative state is no-thing-ness.

On the other hand, Ignatius' contemplation can be expressed as fullness. Ignatius' contemplative state is fulfilled by the imagining of scenes from Jesus' story and becomes a new incarnation of Jesus story in one's heart. The growing fullness of the experience of God is found in the imaginal world. Contemplation is achieved in being with God

⁵⁶ Ibid., 69.

effortlessly through fullness of the union with God through the richness of images.

Therefore, both Cassian's apophatic prayer and Ignatius' kataphatic prayer pursue a contemplative state, a state of being with God effortlessly. The state can be expressed as no-thing-ness by Cassian and as fullness by Ignatius. Their different ways of prayer produce different expressions of the same state. It seems to me that there is no pure way of prayer toward contemplation. The kataphatic prayer and the apophatic prayer can each help one to reach a contemplative state. In contemplative prayer, the only goal of prayer is contemplation, being with God effortlessly.

Even though Cassian's apophatic prayer and Ignatius' kataphatic prayer look like contrasting prayer styles, there are many similarities such as the emphasis on the preparation before prayer time, the emphasis on discretion as a faculty of keeping spiritual journey, the same end of a prayer journey as a state of being with God effortlessly, a passive self state. First of all, both Cassian and Ignatius emphasize the preparation before prayer time. John Levko points out that "in the journey of prayer Cassian takes great pains to emphasize the need for preparation before the formal time of prayer in order to deal with distractions and the instability of the human mind."⁵⁷ Also, Ignatius emphasizes preparation for prayer through "additional directions" and "preludes" of the *Spiritual Exercises* to reduce distractions and instability of the human mind. Cassian regards the virtues of humility and patience as priori elements to help to diffuse the passion of anger, which is seen as damaging to growth in prayer. Ignatius also is grateful for the virtue of patience to overcome the state of desolation.⁵⁸ Ignatius especially emphasizes the repetition of readiness prayer and preludes in every prayer time

⁵⁷ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 84-85.

in the *Spiritual Exercises*. It seems to me that they emphasize preparation of prayer in order to help to maximize inner virtues for a constant journey of spirituality.

One of the similarities between Cassian and Ignatius is the emphasis on discretion as a faculty for keeping on the spiritual journey. Levko points out, “Cassian understands discretion as strengthening prayer, for it is clearly shown that no virtue can possibly be perfectly acquired or continue without the grace of discretion.”⁵⁹ This means that discretion is a faculty to discern between good and evil spirits for growth in prayer. The virtue of discretion leads the pray-er to a constant spiritual journey toward contemplation during the inner struggle. Ignatius also emphasizes discretion and “warns to someone who is a person unskilled in spiritual things and is tempted grossly and openly.”⁶⁰ William Paulsell also points out, “Ignatius warned us in these guidelines that evil often comes to us in the appearance of good, bringing us good and holy thoughts, but subtly drawing us away from God. We should not mistake this for progress.”⁶¹ These two points show the importance of the virtue of discretion to keep one’s prayer journey toward contemplation.

Third, a similarity of Cassian’s prayer and Ignatius’ prayer is to pursue the same state, the contemplative state. The contemplative state is a state of contemplation, being with God effortlessly. Levko insists,

Progress in the spiritual life for Ignatius as well as Cassian is somehow correlated with one’s willingness to let go, with inner freedom, for where there is no risk, no challenge, there is no spiritual growth. Nevertheless, the *Exercises* of Ignatius, like the journey in prayer for Cassian, is no school of the will or an exclusive active/ascetical function. Both are characterized by a passive function which is produced by the Holy Spirit. It is this passive element with an emphasis on patience

⁵⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 86.

⁶¹ Paulsell, 133.

which Ignatius owes primarily to the early monastic writers, Cassian in particular.⁶² This shows that their goal of prayer is contemplation, which can be expressed as a state of freedom and perfection. Also, their process of prayer is a kind of passive way toward a passive self-state. Josef Stierli points out, “Seeking God in all things signifies for Ignatius not only an external conformity to the will of God but an interior surrender of the heart to Divine Providence.”⁶³ This shows that Ignatius emphasizes not only the pure intention to keep the spiritual journey, but the pure result of prayer by the pure intention of prayer. After all, they have the same end of the prayer journey as a state of being with God effortlessly, in a passive-self state.

We live in a pragmatic and positivistic world. Also, we live in a consumer society and imagery culture. Thus, we have lost the apophatic way toward God. People have difficulty in practicing apophatic prayer in contemporary society. However, God is not only beyond this world but also in this world. This means that both of the apophatic way and the kataphatic way are good ways to approach God. The problem is not the ways of prayer but the loss of concern about spiritual life. Every contemplative prayer gives us an encouragement to go to spiritual life. The longing toward God, the strict lifestyle, living in God’s love, and the renunciation of earthly values are the greatest teachings of contemplative prayers for us.

⁶² Levko, 89.

⁶³ Josef Stierli, “Ignatian Prayer: Seeking God in All Things,” in Ignatius of Loyola: His Personality and Spiritual Heritage, 1556-1956, ed. Friedrich Wulf (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977), 156.

Chapter 3

Contemplative Prayer in the Bible

No one can deny that there are many prayers in the Bible. The style, form, content, and method of the prayers in the Bible are influenced by the religious, cultural, political situations and theologies of those who compiled the text. In this chapter, I will discuss whether contemplative prayer is in the Bible or not. Even though many contemplative prayers like *lectio divina*, Jesus prayer, and Ignatian prayer use the Biblical passages, there is no contemplative prayer in terms of the apophatic or the kataphatic way to achieve union with God effortlessly in the Bible. Contemplative prayer is a creative prayer from early Christianity in relation to its theological, philosophical, and cultural differences.

There are many different prayer forms and contents in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The forms and contents of prayer also come from different understandings of God and a human being. In the Bible there are various positions of comprehension for theology and anthropology depending upon each era and writer. I can not discuss every position in detail. Rather, I will point out the general point of view of prayer and its background.¹

¹ All scripture references are to the New International Version.

Prayers in the Old Testament

The general term denoting prayer in the Old Testament is the Hebrew verb “Palal,” which means “judge,” “mediate,” or “pray.” In order to understand the connotation of prayer in the Old Testament, one should comprehend the relationship between God and a human being. Since prayer is a spiritual dialogue between God and a human being, the question of what the theology in the Hebraic prayer is can help answer the question of whether there is contemplative prayer in the Hebraic prayer.

God and the Human Being in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, God creates everything including the human being. However, as Rudolf Bultmann points out, the doctrine of creation is not a speculative cosmology, but a confession of faith.² God as a creator means that God is transcending the world unlike Greek philosophy which explains that the divine power in nature can be comprehended by reason. A human being also is a creature, so God is transcendent and has sovereignty over human beings. In addition, a human being can not see God because to see God would be to die. God’s invisibility is God’s holiness, unapproachableness, and his being is beyond a human being’s control.³ A human being knows God only when he speaks to a human being. There is only a human being’s obedience to God in the relationship between God and a human being. In the Hebrew Bible, there is no perfection of human being and a union with God. God is inaccessible and the Lord of human beings.

In the understanding of a human being in the Old Testament, a human being consists of flesh and soul that are not different in quality. Flesh is not a prison of the soul

² Rudolf Bultmann, Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, trans. R. H. Fuller (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 15.

³ Ibid., 23.

which does not belong intrinsically to a higher world and is not opposed to flesh in a dualistic structure like Platonism. Instead, soul is the energy which gives life to the flesh.⁴ The understanding of a human being in these forms of contemplative prayer, especially apophatic prayer, explains that in order to reach the state of contemplation one should abandon the bodily values because those are spiritual obstacles to block the way toward God. The Israelites did not distinguish between the natural life and the spiritual life.

However, a human being can have a dialogue with God through various ways. God meets people through worship, their petition, covenant, personal prayer, although only God has the power to meet people, and there is no union with God effortlessly. Especially, the possibility of dialogue between God and a human being is derived from the covenant between God and Israelites as a partner. Samuel E. Balentine points out the fact that the dialogue between God and humanity involves a genuine partnership.⁵ Even though this covenant partnership involves an unequal distribution of power and authority because God has an initiative, two parties are mutually bound to one another in a relationship that is desirable and important for both. Both Israel and God have a responsibility to maintain the partnership for the covenant. This covenant relationship is essentially dialogical. This characteristic established the prayer in the Old Testament. So far as prayer is a spiritual communication with God to receive something, there are various prayers in the Hebrew Bible.

⁴ Ibid., 46.

⁵ Balentine, 262.

Hebraic Prayers

The feature of prayer in the Old Testament can be seen in meeting with God which is described by a dialogue with God (Gen. 3:8-19, 4:9-15; Exod. 3:1-12). As Christopher R. Seitz mentions, “Prayer in the Old Testament is not special content, particular technique, or the quality of a person’s spirituality. Rather, it is talk with the living God!”⁶ A human being responds to this meeting as a building of sacred land (Gen. 12:8, 13:18), an obedience (Gen. 12:1-4, 13:14-18), a faith (Gen. 15:1-16), and an asking (Gen. 15:2, 8, 18:23). However, prayer in the Old Testament is possible when God reveals Himself to people. Seitz insists that prayer in the Old Testament is fundamentally about God’s holy, named self being made accessible to humans by God and on his own sovereign terms.⁷ Thus prayer is not a human being’s effort to reach God from below by a human being’s power and method. Rather, it is the consequence of his having made himself known and our faithful response to that prior knowledge.⁸ The meeting can happen through a visitor (Gen. 18:2, Judg. 13:6) or a dream. In the Old Testament, prayer has a role recovering the relationship between God and people through a dialogue with God who is tremendous and transcendent in dwelling in the highest. Deuteronomy emphasizes a recollection of God’s omnipotence. The recollection has to be kept in the mind to encourage true prayer (Deut. 4:9, 32-39, 7:18-19, 8:2). Moses asks God’s grace by starting from recollection (Deut. 9:25-29). The thanksgiving, which offers the first fruit, has to be accomplished through this recollection (Deut. 26:5-11). Thus the prayer is located in the covenant between God and people. Since a disaster is a call of God to ask

⁶ Christopher R. Seitz, “Prayer in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible,” in Into God’s Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 5-6.

⁷ Ibid., 6.

⁸ Ibid., 15.

Israelites to return to God (Amos 4:6-11), and in order to solve the problem people must meet with God (Amos 4:12), people have to seek God for survival (Amos 5:4). Since there are complicated prayer forms and contents in the Bible, I classify the prayers in three categories to explain their characteristics; petition, thanksgiving, and intercession.

Petition

There are many prayers of asking and petition in the Old Testament. The various verbs which express prayer in Hebrew are like these: to request ('athar), to shout or to cry (sa'aq), to look for or to search for (sha'al), to petition (tpillah), and so on. Furthermore, two fifths of the 150 Psalms are prayers related to asking and petition to solve a problem during a hard time. In the Old Testament, we can find representative examples such as "To the Lord, I cry aloud, and he answers me from his holy hill" (Ps. 3:4), Hezekiah's asking for extending his life (Isa. 38:10-20, Jeremiah's petition for saving Israel from Babylon (Jer. 32:16-25). In the prayers of petition in the Old Testament, they have to include the faith and assurance to God and recollection of God's grace from the past (Ps. 3:3-4, Isa. 38:20, Jer. 32:17).

A recollection of God's grace is an important feature of a prayer of petition. Even though the initiative of meeting and dialogue between God and the people belongs to God, people can ask for something of God because the remembrance of God's gracious response to people when they ask. So far as they trust and believe God's love and grace, and ask for something in faith, God answers or responds to them in any way although there is an unconceivable distance between God and people. Therefore one can say that the prayer of petition in the Old Testament involves not only asking, shouting, and

petition, but also faith and trust of God and a recollection of God's grace for Israelites in the past.

In the aspect of God's response, one can notice God's sovereignty in terms of God's will. One can categorize three different forms about God's response to people's petitions. First, God responds immediately to people's requests. The great example of this form is Hezekiah's prayer to heal his disease. To Hezekiah's asking for recovering his sickness with tears, God responds immediately like this:

This is what the Lord, the God of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life. (2 Kings 20:5-6)

Second, God answers a petition after waiting for a long time. Isaac's story in Genesis 25 shows this form exactly. Isaac prays for his wife's pregnancy because Rebekah, a wife of Isaac, was barren. Isaac received answers from God like this:

Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The Lord answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. (Gen. 25:21)

Through this response of God, Isaac had two sons. This response looks like an immediate answer of prayer. However, Isaac got married with Rebekah when he was forty years old, and he got sons when he was sixty years old. We can find that there is a long wait for a response from God.

Last, there could be no response from God for people asking for something.

Moses' prayer represents this form. He prayed like this:

Let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan – that fine hill country and Lebanon. (Deut. 3:25)

Moses did not receive any answer from God to this prayer. These three forms of God's response reveal the structure of communication between God and people. God is

the initiator of the dialogue, not people. People cannot go toward God from below by any effort of the human being.

Thanksgiving

Second, one of the major prayer forms and contents in the Old Testament is thanksgiving. The Israelites had given God thanksgiving when they had experienced not only prosperity but also an overcoming from suffering and pain. They had met many sufferings and adversities in person and in the community. Whenever they had met these difficult situations, they had asked God for salvation, and then they had experienced a response from God. Thanksgiving prayer had occurred in God's response.

Give thanks to the Lord, ... In my anguish I cried to (qard) the Lord, and he answered by setting me free. (Ps. 118:1-5)

These verses in Psalms show the formula of thanksgiving prayer in the Old Testament. The prayer of thanksgiving had occurred when God had answered the Israelites' asking for solving the sufferings and the difficulties. The following verses show the fact that a prayer of thanksgiving involves God's response and Israelites' asking:

This poor man called (qara), and the Lord heard (shama') him; he saved him out of all his troubles. (Ps. 34:6)

The righteous cry out (sa'aq) and the Lord hears (shama') them; he delivers them from all their troubles. (Ps. 34:17)

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard (shama') my cry. (Ps. 40:1)

These verses are parts of prayers of thanksgiving in Psalms. However, God's response to the Israelites' asking for something belongs to God's will. There is no way to

go toward to God for union with God in the Old Testament. Merely, there are only obedience and listening to God for human beings in the relationship between them.

Intercession

Lastly, there are many intercessory prayers in the Old Testament. I would like to distinguish three perspectives of the intercessory pray-er: prophet, king, and priest.

First of all, everybody regards Moses' intercessory prayer for Sodom as the first intercessory prayer (Gen. 18:16-33). The second Moses' intercessory prayer is the prayer for Abimelech (Gen. 20:7). In this context, God calls Abraham as a prophet (nabi). In the Old Testament, the roles of the prophet were a messenger who delivers words of God as well as an intercessory pray-er for people.

The feature of an intercessory pray-er as a role of a prophet is revealed in Moses' prayer. The writer of Deuteronomy insists that Moses is the greatest prophet in the history of Israel. "No prophet has risen in Israel like Moses" (Deut. 34:10). Moses' intercessory prayers are various. Due to a request of the king of Egypt, Moses prays for a stop to the disasters; the disaster of the frogs (Exod. 8:12-13), the disaster of the flies (Exod. 8:29-31), the disaster of the hail (Exod. 9:22-). During the desert life, as an intercessory pray-er, Moses prays for his people to get water (Exod. 17:1-7), for forgiving his people's sin (Num. 11:1-2; Exod. 32:11- , 32:31- , 33:12- , 34:9), for healing Miriam's leprosy (Num. 12).

Samuel's intercessory prayer is a famous intercession in the Old Testament. Israelites ask that Samuel does not stop crying out to the Lord for them, and that God may rescue them from the hand of the Philistines. Following the people's request,

Samuel cried out (saaq) to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him (1 Sam. 7:9-11). Samuel confessed his intercessory prayer life for Israel: "As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you" (1 Sam. 12:23). Samuel also is called as a prophet in the Old Testament (1 Sam. 3:19-21). Every prophet in the Old Testament carried the intercessory prayer on their back for the people. Jeremiah is the most representative intercessory pray-er among the prophets. Especially, he distinguished true and false prophets as a role of the intercessory pray-er (Jer. 27:18).

In the intercessory prayer of the Israel kings, the kings ask for various things not only in behalf of themselves but also in behalf of others and Israel, such as King David's intercessory prayer for his son, Solomon; Solomon's prayer for the temple; and Jehoshaphat's and Hezekiah's intercessory prayer for Israel's rescue from the enemy's attack.

One of the important duties of the priests in the Old Testament is to pray for the blessing of people. The most well known priestly blessing is in Num. 6:24-26: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." In spite of every intercessory prayer's element of petition not for oneself but for others or Israel, I would say that the intercessory prayer is a kind of prayer of petition in Hebraic prayers.

In any prayer in the Old Testament, there is no feature for a human being to go toward God intentionally to experience of presence of God. Every prayer is a response to God's invitation to meet with people. There is no teleological structure to understand God and a human being in the Old Testament. Rather, there is the covenant partnership relationship to understand God and a human being in it. Therefore, in the Old Testament,

one can not find contemplative prayer although there are various prayer forms and contents in it because of the different understanding of God and human being from contemplative prayer.

Prayers in the New Testament

The general term denoting prayer in the New Testament is the Greek verb “aiteo,” which means “ask,” “ask to,” or “demand.” In order to understand the meaning of the prayer in the New Testament, one should comprehend the influential elements to primitive Christianity which forms the New Testament. Unlike the Old Testament, the era of the New Testament brought new philosophical, theological, cultural understanding of God and human being. Not only Jesus himself but also all writers of the New Testament were influenced by the complicated background of their time. Fred L. Fisher addresses the importance of the theology of prayer in the New Testament like this:

Prayer begins with God; what God is and does is the controlling factor in prayer. This must be, since prayer is the approach of man to God as he seeks God's fellowship, favor, help, and approval. Intercourse with God can never spring from what man is, desires, hopes, or purposes. A study of prayer in the New Testament must therefore begin with a study of the theology of prayer, the fundamental conceptions of God that form the foundation for prayer and that determine the vital elements of prayer. The way a man prays reveals what he believes about God; what he believes about God determines how he prays.⁹

Fisher shows that the most important thing we should do before starting to study the characteristics of prayer in the New Testament is to understand the concept of God and a human being. Therefore we need a preliminary understanding about God and a human being in the New Testament in order to clarify the characteristics of prayer in it.

⁹ Fisher, 11.

God and the Human Being in the New Testament

In general, scholars agree with the fact that the New Testament is affected by various backgrounds like Greek philosophy and Religion, Greco-Roman world, Jewish tradition, the Old Testament, and other elements. Even though, in the understanding of the concept of God and humanity, the New Testament succeeded in the comprehension of God and a human being of the Old Testament to some degree, but there are tremendous changes to perceive due to the change of philosophy and theology. Greek philosophy definitely affected the theology and anthropology of the New Testament. A speculative understanding of God as *logos* gives God a new characteristic. Although God is transcendent above this world, God creates nature by divine reason and law. We can perceive the nature of God through creatures. Furthermore, the Incarnation of God through Jesus Christ shows the nature of God.

Also, in the understanding of humanity, dualism affects the New Testament strongly. A human being consists of body and soul. However, unlike the Hebrew understanding of the holistic relationship between body and soul, the New Testament, generally, has a dualistic hierarchical understanding about body and soul. The body pursues earthly values, and on the contrary, a soul seeks to reach a spiritual world. Also, following the effect of Plato's and Aristotle's teleological understanding of the world, humanity pursues a higher level of the universe. And the final goal is to accomplish the highest, namely, The Good (Plato) and Happiness (Aristotle). This teleological and hierarchical understanding of nature had influenced the New Testament-and early church theologians even more.

In addition, early Christianity, even Jesus, was influenced by the Greco-Roman world. This world had a definitely different idea of the relationship between a divine being and a human being. One of the main values of the Greco-Roman world was reciprocity. David E. Aune points out that the idea of reciprocity in social interaction was naturally assumed to regulate the relationship between worshipers and their gods.¹⁰ Their relationship was not a ruling-obedience relationship, but a give and take relationship. When people requested something, they had to bring a gift to the gods. This gift was a sacrifice. They asked something just after offering sacrifice to the gods. The answer of the gods was always positive in response to the sacrifice.¹¹ It is not the same as the covenant relationship in the Old Testament. In the covenant relationship, God is a sovereign. Even though the New Testament kept the many characteristics of the Old Testament, the New Testament was affected by the other world.

Prayer in the New Testament

Basically, the concept of prayer in the New Testament followed the features of the Old Testament. The Old Testament regards prayer as a dialogue between God and people, and similarly, the New Testament does not deny that prayer is a communication with God. Oscar Cullmann points out that the essence of all prayer is that it is a conversation with God as a partner.¹² However, the ground of the conversation between God and people had been changed. In the Old Testament, as I already mentioned, the basic ground of the dialogue between God and people is the covenantal partnership. On the other hand, it

¹⁰ David E. Aune, "Prayer in the Greco-Roman World," in Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 26.

¹¹ Ibid., 31.

¹² Oscar Cullmann, Prayer in the New Testament: With Answers from the New Testament to Today's Questions, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1995), 17.

seems to me that the New Testament has a lack of theology of the covenant between God and God's people. Rather, in the New Testament, the relationship between God and God's people is a closer relationship like father and son through the teaching of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it seems to me that in the conversation with God in the New Testament, God is more intimate to God's people. One can notice this characteristic through various prayers in the New Testament, especially in the prayer life of Jesus and his teaching about prayer. I would like to follow the three forms of prayer, namely, petition, thanksgiving, and intercession, the same as the three forms of prayer in the Old Testament, in order to clarify the characteristics of the prayer in the New Testament.

Petition

One of the major features of the prayer in the New Testament is a petitionary prayer, which means that we ask God for something that we desire to happen. Oscar Cullmann clarifies the five kinds of petitionary prayers in the New Testament.¹³ The first petitionary prayer is to request material things. The children's asking for bread and fish from their father in Jesus' teaching about prayer in Matthew chapter 7 confirms this example. The second request is to pray for help in material need. In this petition, the most important thing is to obey God's will. The third form of petition is to request spiritual gifts. The fourth is to pray through the form of intercession to heal people with miracles. The last petition is to request for preservation in and from temptation. In the Old Testament, the petitionary prayer includes a confidence of God and a recollection of God's grace. On the contrary, in the New Testament, even though the petitionary prayer

¹³ Ibid., 22-29.

requires faith in God, the prayer of petition has a stronger asking of God who is regarded as a father.

The Old Testament does not call God as father because there is no intimate relationship between God and people. God is called by God's name, such as *elohim*, *adonai*, or *elohenu*. However, in the New Testament's Lord's prayer, Jesus call God Abba. There have been many debates about the meaning of Abba.¹⁴ Charlesworth insists that even though Abba can mean "Daddy," and little children obviously addressed their fathers this way in ancient Israel as they do today in modern Israel, there is no compelling evidence that Jesus used Abba in that sense.¹⁵ However, there is no doubt that Abba means "Father," and it means that the relationship between God and Jesus is definitely intimate. Charlesworth confirms that there is no doubt then that the Abba which Jesus used to address God reveals the very basis of his communion with God.¹⁶

No one can deny that Jesus always lived in contemplation. This means that Jesus is always in union with God. He did not need the apophatic way or the kataphatic way to accomplish contemplation. Therefore, his prayer is not a contemplative prayer. Rather his prayer is a prayer in contemplation.

Jesus calls God Abba, and then he teaches prayer using Abba. Jesus' teaching about, not only the Lord's prayer, but also some petitionary prayers emphasizes the intimacy with God as a Father. Klaus Berger explains more explicitly that typical for the New Testament conception of prayer is the notion that the distance between God and human beings has been broken through, and theological language here speaks of free

¹⁴ James H. Charlesworth, "A Caveat on Textual Transmission and the Meaning of Abba: A Study of the Lord's Prayer," in *The Lord's Prayer and Other Prayer Texts from the Greco-Roman Era*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Mark Harding, and Mark Kiley (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994), 9.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

access to God or of the relationship of children to their father.¹⁷ The prayer of petition can be compared with what children request of their father for something. This is not a covenant partner relationship. Rather, it is a caring relationship with faith.

It seems to me that there are two main backgrounds which affect Jesus' intimacy with God and the active petition. One is the Jewish prayer life in the first century, and the other is the prayer life in the Greco-Roman world. In the prayer life in the Greco-Roman world, the general structure of the prayer was three-fold: an invocation, a narratio, and the request itself.¹⁸ The Greek people believed that the gods always listen to people's call. However, unlike the Old Testament, in the Greek religion the gods exist in space and are not omnipresent. Thus when people invoke the gods, they must come.¹⁹ This distance between the gods and the people is less than the distance between God and a human being, even spiritually.

Jesus has a stronger intimacy with God than Greek people's intimacy with the divine beings. In the petitionary prayer of the Greco-Roman world, a prayer answer from the gods required people to give a sacrifice or gifts to the gods. However, Jesus does not need a sacrifice or gift to God, because God is his father. This shows that the petitionary prayer of Jesus or his teaching has a strong petitionary prayer attitude, which is based on Jesus' intimacy with God as the relationship father and son.

The second background to affect Jesus' intimacy with God in his prayer is the Jewish prayer life in the first century. The Jewish tradition had kept the characteristics of God in the Old Testament fundamentally. For the Jewish in the first century, God is a

¹⁷ Klaus Berger, *Identity and Experience in the New Testament*, trans. Charles Muenchow (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 215-16.

¹⁸ Aune, 31.

¹⁹ Ibid., 32.

transcendental reality and a cause of all to be as the Creator.²⁰ However, Jesus called God as Father, and taught his disciples to address God as Father (Abba). The “Father” is also found in Jewish prayers in the case of asking forgiveness. Jesus also taught his disciples to relate to God as Father when they appealed to his mercy and sought his forgiveness.²¹ Even though Jesus stands on the Jewish tradition to some degree, Jesus uses “Abba,” which is a more intimate name to express the close relationship than other Jewish people in his time.

In the Pauline letters, Paul calls God as Father (Rom. 8:15-17). Also, when Paul speaks to his addressees about their relationship to God, he urges them to recognize their more intimate relation as God’s children. This shows that Paul encourages his readers to pray to God more consciously in terms of “Abba” for their intimacy with God.²²

In the petitionary prayer, faith between God and pray-er is a precondition for requesting. In the New Testament, on the contrary, faith between Abba and children who ask is an essential ground for requesting. Jesus prays a lot for petition and teaches the petitionary prayer on his sermon on the mount. It seems to me that the stronger attitude of petition in the New Testament was affected by the changing of the concept of God. Fisher points out the characteristics of prayer in the New Testament through his five necessary presuppositions of the practice of the prayer.²³ First, he introduces that the personality of God to whom we pray is personal. This means people can and do have personal relations with God in some way. Theology of Incarnation supports the

²⁰ Asher Finkel, “Prayer in Jewish Life of the First Century as Background to Early Christianity,” in Into God’s Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 51.

²¹ Ibid., 52.

²² Richard N. Longenecker, “Prayer the Pauline Letters,” in Into God’s Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 224.

²³ Fisher, 13.

personality of God fully. Second, the personality of God implies a concept of the immanence of God who is not isolated from this world, transcending this world, and just watching it. Like Greek gods, God is more intimate with people and meets them personally. Third, Fisher points out the belief that God has the power to make a difference in the life of the individual worshiper as well as in the course of human history. This belief is exactly the same as the belief of the Old Testament which emphasizes God's omnipotence and sovereignty. Fourth, we must believe in the susceptibility of God to human influence, if prayer is to become a meaningful experience in our life. It does not mean that we can persuade God to do something. Rather, it means that even though God is omniscience, God requests our prayer just like parents wait for children's asking although they already know their children's need. However, Jesus looks like an aggressive petitioner in his teaching of prayer. Jesus admonished his disciples, "Ask, and it will be given you" (Matt. 7:7). Also, James expresses this teaching through the negative usage in his statement: "You do not have, because you do not ask" (James 4:2). But, there is no evidence in the New Testament that prayer affects God. It seems to me that the susceptibility of God and Jesus' strong petitionary attitude presuppose the intimacy between God and petitioner like the relationship between father and son. Finally, the last theological presupposition of the prayer is that a pray-er is weak and needs the help of some outside power to accomplish the fulfillment of one's life.

Unlike the relationship between God and God's people as a covenant partner in the Old Testament, there is a strong intimate relationship between God and God's people as father and son. This characteristic shows the different elements of petitionary prayer in between the Old and New Testament.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving prayer is a dominant prayer expressing praise to God for all one's goodness and benefits. It seems to me that thanksgiving prayer in the New Testament succeeded the tradition of prayer in the Old Testament directly.

Sacrifice was as central to ancient Israel as it was to the ancient Greek. However, God of Israel did not answer a petitionary prayer due to the past sacrifice to God. Rather, one of the major reasons why the God of Israel should answer prayer is because he had made certain promises in the past, so called the covenant.²⁴ Sacrifice was an expression of thanksgiving of the Israelites.

On the contrary, in Greek religion, the gods should answer the petitionary prayer because of the sacrifice or the gifts. There was reciprocity between the gods and petitioner. Since they had a give and take relationship, the Greek religion did not have a thanksgiving prayer, but expressed thanksgiving through a votive offering.²⁵

The prayer of thanksgiving is included in praising, worship, and thanks. In the New Testament there is no idea that man can receive anything that is good solely as a result of his own efforts and achievement. This does not mean that one can not do anything for oneself. Rather, it means that everything that is achieved by one's tears and labor is the gifts of God who has sovereignty. Not only material blessings but also spiritual blessings are the gifts of God. Thus thanksgiving is naturally expressed in worship and is to be a Christian duty. To refuse to express thanks to God is regarded as

²⁴ Aune, 41.

²⁵ Ibid., 37.

one of the critical marks of people in their sin.²⁶ We can see a proof by Paul's description, "For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him" (Rom. 1:21).

The understanding of thanksgiving in the New Testament is not only related to the time of prosperity and blessing, but also the time of disappointment and suffering. In the prayer life of Jesus, the first of the recorded prayers is his prayer of thanksgiving at the time he sent forth his disciples two by two. In that prayer, Jesus prays "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will" (Matt. 11:25-26). The situation and atmosphere of Jesus who teaches the Kingdom of God are not good. Instead of the wise, babes understand his teaching. However, in this prayer, we can see that Jesus recognized this situation as the provision of God's sovereign will, and so gave thanks for it.²⁷ The thanksgiving prayer of Jesus is a communion with God to discern his will. Furthermore, Jesus' thanksgiving prayer, in the case of Lazarus at the grave, is a more terrible situation for thanksgiving. In spite of the worst case, Jesus gives thanks to God that "thou hast heard me" (John 11:41-42). It shows Jesus' communion with God always, and he has an assurance of the result whatever happens. Thanksgiving prayer is an expression of people to surrender God's will, power, and sovereignty. It seems to me that the characteristics of thanksgiving prayer flow on the same stream of the Old Testament.

In the perspective of the primitive church, thanksgiving is a major feature of the church. One part of the common activity of the first century church was the practice of

²⁶ Fisher, 61.

²⁷ Ibid., 31.

giving thanks to God for many blessings.²⁸ The following passage in Acts shows an evidence that thanksgiving is a duty of the church:

day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. (Acts 2: 46-47)

Paul also teaches this duty of the church to his church. One of the examples from Paul is “Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Col. 3:17). In the New Testament, thanksgiving to God is a duty of not only church duty to be fulfilled in the corporate life of the body of Christ, but also a duty and obligation of every Christian.²⁹

Therefore, in the New Testament, the prayer of thanksgiving is a duty and obligation of the church and Christians whenever they experience prosperity or suffering, because God has a sovereignty, and the church and Christians have to obey God’s will. Basically, thanksgiving prayer in the New Testament succeeded the characteristics of thanksgiving prayer in the Old Testament.

Intercession

Like the Old Testament, one can find intercessory prayer throughout the New Testament. Intercessory prayer is a petition to God in behalf of others including a person and a community in the New Testament. Jesus is the best example of an intercessory pray-er who prays for his enemy. He prayed for the forgiveness of his tormentors while he was hanging on the cross (Luke 23:34). He prayed for Jerusalem and its inhabitants.

²⁸ Ibid., 62.

²⁹ Ibid., 63.

He prayed for his disciples' spiritual growth and development. It is true that Jesus practiced intercession constantly.

Like Jesus' constant intercessory prayer, in the New Testament, many intercessory prayers seem like a Christian duty to God just as thanksgiving. Fisher points out that one can see in the following passages that speak of the prayer of intercession as a Christian duty; "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another" (James 5:16). "Pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). "Pray for us" (Heb. 13:18). "I urge that ... intercessions ... be made for all men" (1 Tim. 2:1).³⁰

However, after Jesus' absence, the feature of the intercessory prayer had changed. Jesus became a mediator for his followers' relationship with God. Jesus said, "In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf" (John 16:26). Jesus urged that his followers' relationship of trust and love in him puts them in an intimate relationship to the God who loves them. Also, they believed that they can speak directly to God as Father, because Jesus as the Son invokes God as Father, and that his disciples can now do the same.³¹ Jesus as a mediator revealed in the repeated formulation that Jesus' followers' prayers to God are to be in Jesus' name. Therefore, Jesus did not need to do an intercessory prayer to the Father on behalf of his followers, because the followers' prayer will be Jesus' prayer by Jesus' name.

Paul also practiced intercession constantly. Among Paul's prayer passages, intercessory prayers are the more numerous than any other type of prayers, such as doxology, praise, blessing, worship, hymns, psalms, thanksgiving, petition, and general

³⁰ Ibid., 83.

³¹ Andrew T. Lincoln, "God's Name, Jesus' Name, and Prayer in the Fourth Gospel," in Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 175.

prayer. Gordon P. Wiles insists that one of the important features of Paul's intercessory prayer is community-centered intercessory prayer.³² Every letter of Paul is filled with assertions of hidden concern and prayer for his readers. The readers of Paul's letter are always related to church, community of Christian faith, and the body of Christ. The relationship between the intercessor and those for whom he prays is a community relationship. In this relationship Paul appeals to his readers repeatedly to pray for him.

The intercessory prayer in the Old Testament is related to individual person and Israelites, namely, nation. However, in the New Testament, especially for Paul, each community of Christian faith is bound as the body of Christ, and is a basic object of his intercession. Since each community had a different problem, Paul had a duty to pray to God to overcome the problem of each community. Also each community has a duty to pray for Paul to accomplish his ministry.

Even though the major characteristics of prayer in the New Testament succeeded the features of prayer in the Old Testament, there are some intrinsic differences between them. In petitionary prayer, the prayer in the New Testament is a more intimate relationship with God through incarnation of Jesus Christ. The relationship of a covenant partnership has been changed to the father-child relationship, although God always is sovereign. Thanksgiving prayer has exactly the same structure in the Old and New Testaments. However, intercessory prayer became a community-centered intercessory prayer following a new theology of the people of God in the New Testament.

In the Bible, there is no contemplative prayer to pursue a contemplative state, in which union with God is effortlessly achieved through an apophatic way or a kataphatic

³² Gordon P. Wiles, Paul's Intercessory Prayers: The Significance of the Intercessory Prayer Passages in the Letters of St. Paul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 13.

way. Therefore, I would say that contemplative prayer was developed with desert monasticism, not in the Bible. However, I would say that in the Bible, there are many resources to use for contemplative prayer as a tool to go toward God, in whom we can reach contemplation because the teleological structure is implied in the understanding of the relationship between God and a human being in the New Testament.

Even though contemplative prayer is not found in the Bible, it is a necessary form of prayer because it uses the texts of the Bible to reach a contemplative state.

Furthermore, contemplative prayer is a practice in which faithful Christians may put on the mind of Christ or become Christlike through developing a life that is contemplative, and then experiencing a sense of living in a greater union with God in the way Jesus' life was.

Chapter 4

Contemplative Prayer in the Korean Religions

Korea is a country where many religious traditions coexist. Historically, each religious tradition has been mixed with each other, or has been added to the other religion. The fundamental indigenous religion in Korea, Shamanism, has been laid under every religious tradition in the history of Korea. Daniel A. Kister exactly explains the situation of the Korean religious tradition.

The paths of the Korean religious imagination wind through strata of experience of sacred realities that go back thousands of years. Christianity arrived about 200 years ago, Buddhism and Confucianism 1400 years ago. Christianity has seen phenomenal growth in the last two or three decades of the twentieth century; Buddhist temples founded centuries ago still flourish all over the country; and Confucian standards continue to dominate Korean mores. At the bedrock of the Korean religious experience lie Shamanic rituals, or *Kut*.¹

Even though there have been a lot of complicated relationships between the religious traditions, each religious tradition has a unique perspective of God or gods, peculiar prayer styles, and special rituals. Understanding the prayer styles of each religious tradition will help to clarify the background of the prayer styles of the Korean Protestant church.

Shamanism

Shamanism is an indigenous primitive religion which has dominated Korean history. Throughout history, Shamanism has affected all religions in Korea such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity. In relation to prayer, the shamanistic attitude

¹ Daniel A. Kister, Korean Shamanist Ritual: Symbols and Dramas of Transformation (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1997), 3.

has influenced the prayer style of each religion. The shamanistic attitude is to ask for materialistic blessings, the healing of diseases, and happiness of family from the gods through a Shaman. Therefore, understanding Shamanism is a way to comprehend a present Korean protestant Christian prayer style which is a worldly blessing, petition dominated Tongsung prayer.

Shamanism has led Korea to become a highly religious people. Wi Jo Kang points out that

From the early years of Korean history until this day the religious life of the Korean people is characterized by the dominance of the primitive religious phenomena called Shamanism. This religious life centers around shamans who are thought to have a special 'technique of ecstasy' which enables them to communicate with the spirits in divination, exorcism, and healing.²

Korean people call the female shaman "Mudang" which is like "Exorcist" or "Medium" in English, while the male shaman is called "Paksu," a blind man whose role is the same as the Mudang. However, the Mudang dominates Korean Shamanism over the Paksu.

A Shaman performs kut as a Shamanistic ritual. The Mudang has a master role in the ceremonies of the religious ritual. The roles of the Mudang in kut are various, such as a mediator between the dead and the living, a messenger from the dead and spirits, a healer, an exorcist, a fortuneteller, and a priest who makes harmony between god and a human being. The Mudang's ritual role of kut is the same as the goal of the Mudang's life.

Kut could be distinguished as two different types: a communal kut or a public village kut; and a family kut or a private personal kut. A kut of the community is to establish a god centered harmony in its village. Daniel Kister summarizes the goals of

² Wi Jo Kang, Religion and Politics in Korea Under the Japanese Rule (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987), 1.

the public village kut as to achieve harmony with the gods and spirits, to release persons from evil, and to have a heightened self-awareness and acceptance of reality.³ It seems that the role of the Mudang in a public village kut is like a priest or a messenger in terms of encouraging people to make harmony with gods, to pray for peace in their village, and to obey the will of heaven. On the other hand, the purpose of a private kut, based on a personal or family centered request, is to achieve a solution to a problem, a healing from disease, a freedom from evil, happiness of family, and material blessings. Thus, the role of the Mudang in the kut of the private setting should be called a mediator, a healer, an exorcist, and a fortuneteller. Daniel Kister points that “the Mudang act in private family kut that seek freedom from life’s evil through healing, reconciliation, and a clearer perspective on one’s situation through interaction with the gods and ancestral spirits.”⁴ During the private kut, a person or a family who request the kut pray through the Mudang to the gods to solve their problems.

When people meet an unfortunate situation, they believe that gods or ancestral spirits have a problem. The Mudang, as a mediator, conjures up the gods or the ancestral spirits to pacify them. She tells a person’s or family’s situation to the conjured gods or the ancestral spirits, and she delivers the gods’ or the spirits’ voice to the person or family through her voice. Generally, the Korean Mudang does not go to the spirit world. Rather, the Mudang conjures up spirits from the spirit world to the actual world, and spirits enter into the Mudang’s body. Through the Mudang, people can clarify the problems and eliminate the problems which the gods and the spirits have. Especially, in the case of

³ Kister, 64.

⁴ Ibid., 64.

diseases, old Koreans believe that evil spirits cause bad diseases. Myung Keun Choi insists,

The Korean people were obsessed with the superstitious idea that dreadful diseases were caused by evil spirits. Smallpox was thought to be caused by the presence of an evil spirit known as 'mama' which entered into a child. Therefore, they did not give any medicine to the patient but rather offered sacrifices to the evil spirits in the hope of saving the child.⁵

Since people believe that severe diseases are caused by evil spirits, in order to cure the diseases the Mudang has to exorcise the evil from the person's body or to negotiate with the evil spirit on the diseases.

According to the understanding of Shamanism, there are many kinds of gods and spirits in the world. James Huntley Grayson categorizes the spirits as six levels: Hananim, Gods of the Air, Spirits of the Earth, Spirits of the Water, Nameless Spirits, and Ancestral Spirits.⁶ Hananim is the Supreme Being, which has been known in Korean variously as Hananim, Hanallim, Hanunim, or Hanullim, means the Ruler of Heaven. Gods of the Air, Obang changgun, are Hananim's highest subordinates, which are located immediately beneath the Ruler of Heaven. San-sin, the mountain spirit, is the most important spirit among the Spirits of the Earth. A minor spirit among the Spirits of the Earth is called Chon-sin, which is responsible for the fertility of the soil. Yong or dragons represent the Spirits of the Water, which live in all water-related places such as seas, rivers, streams, and springs, and they control rain. Yong-Wang, Dragon King, is the King of the Sea who controls all of the water related world. Nameless Spirits, which make up the lowest spirit world, include ghosts and limps. Some are benevolent, but many are rascals. Ancestral Spirits are a more Confucian-oriented concept in Shamanism.

⁵ Myung Keun Choi, Changes in Korean Society between 1884-1910 as a Result of the Introduction of Christianity, Asian Thought and Culture, v. 20. (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 21.

⁶ James Huntley Grayson, Korea: A Religious History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 260-65.

Kut is a kind of prayer in Shamanism. While Mudang performs a kut, there are singing and dancing along with people's prayer to ask for solutions to their problems. Communal kut is a prayer ritual to ask peace in the village and abundance of the village, while private kut is a prayer ritual to petition gods or spirits through Mudang for protecting the home, solving problems, such as illness and distress, and supplicating spirits to have worldly blessing. Therefore, in Shamanism, there is only the petitionary prayer of the people, although the response of the request is always dominated by gods or Spirits as every petitionary prayer in any religion is just like that. However, Mudang's kut has a similar structure of contemplative prayer through the kataphatic way, although it is not exactly the same as contemplative prayer in Christianity. The Mudang sings and dances to communicate with gods or Spirits, and intentionally tries to unite with them through her body. People call the state of union with gods or Spirits ecstasy. However, Mudang's ecstasy is different from a state of contemplation, because Mudang's ecstasy is an activity to deliver the message of the spirits to the people who ask for something, while Christian contemplation is a state of resting in God. Mudang is creating the union with gods, while contemplative pray-er is being in the union with God.

Buddhism

So far, as prayer is a dialogue with God from the concept of Western Christianity, there is no prayer form in Buddhism. However, if the concept of prayer is an intentional approach toward an ultimate state, however that is described, one can find a prayer form in Buddhism. Furthermore, even though Korean Buddhism has changed its features according to changing eras and cultures, it has included many prayer forms, such as

petitionary prayer, intercessory prayer, and meditative prayer in it. I will present each prayer form in Korean Buddhism in relation to its background.

First, a Buddhist prays to Buddha for one's hope, problem solving, blessing, and petition. This prayer is a petitionary prayer, although petitionary prayer is not related to the original Buddha's teaching. However, Korean Buddhists practice petitionary prayer in the context of Koreanized Buddhism. Being geographically contiguous with China, the history and development of culture on the Korean peninsula has been strongly influenced by that of the continent. Buddhism was introduced by a Chinese Buddhist monk, Sundo, who was invited by King Sosurim, a king of Koguryu, which was one of the three early kingdoms of Korea in AD 372. After 2 years, another Chinese Buddhist monk, Hado, visited Korea officially to introduce Buddhism.⁷ The new religion, Buddhism, had spread out rapidly to the peninsula. However, Buddhism could not settle down with its own characteristics, but started to be mixed with Korea's thoughts and aboriginal religion, Shamanism. Since the petitionary prayer form of Shamanism added to Buddhism, Korean Buddhists have practiced petitionary prayer naturally. After Wonhyo (607-686), one of the most outstanding Buddhist monks in Silla, attempted to bring Buddhism from isolated mountain temples and Royal palaces to the people,⁸ the people's aboriginal belief mingled with Buddhism. It brought prayer in the form of petition to Korean Buddhism.

Second, one of the most important prayer forms in Korean Buddhism is intercession for the nation. When Mongolia attacked Koryo(Korea), in order to defend the national security, the Buddhist monks asked for divine power to end the national

⁷ Kyumjunsewoong, Hankookbulkyosa (History of Korean Buddhism), trans. Hyunsook Sin (Seoul: Minjoksa, 1987), 23.

⁸ Kang, 5.

crisis. They carved Buddhist Scripture, Tripitaka Koreana, into wooden panels, and kept them in the Haein temple. It took sixteen years to completely carve them, and it is one of the most outstanding compilations in the history of Korean Buddhism.⁹ Even though the intercessory prayer form in Koryo Buddhism is different from the intercessory prayer form in Christianity, I would say that it is a kind of intercessory prayer because it is asking of divine power for the nation.

Third, the main prayer form of Buddhism is a meditation, which is derived from Buddha's original teaching. Buddha's main concern is not God, but the human being. His understanding of the world and the human being is a fullness of suffering. He believes that the right understanding of the world and the strict disciplines of each individual person can accomplish freedom from suffering. One can perceive Buddha's thoughts in the His teaching of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. The first Truth is that all existence is misery. The second Truth asserts that misery is rooted in ignorant craving. The third Truth is that misery may be abolished by abolishing ignorant craving. The last Truth asserts that this can be done by the Noble Eightfold Path.¹⁰ He believes that people misunderstand the essence of the world, and have a wrong attitude in trying to overcome the problem. Thus he proposes the way of escaping from those misunderstandings and wrong attitudes.

Enlightenment is the way to accomplish solving the human problem, and is achieved by strict ascetic disciplines. Buddha teaches the way of salvation, which is not the same concept of Christianity, by means of the renouncing of ignorant desires. He teaches the way to reach Nirvana through the Noble Eightfold Path which is understood

⁹ Yang, 8-9.

¹⁰ John A. Hutchison, Paths of Faith, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1975), 113.

as a Middle Way to Nirvana. The first two steps, right understanding and right mindedness, are concerned with understanding and the attitude of the human mind toward the Buddhist way, the Higher Wisdom. The next three Paths, right speech, right action, and right livelihood, are related to the ethical disciplines following the moral quality of Buddhist life. The last three steps, right effort, right meditation, and right emancipation, are called the mental disciplines, through which one can achieve the spiritual goal, Nirvana.¹¹ Since everything in this world is delusion, in order to reach Nirvana, one should renounce all ignorant craving, even thought, concept, mood, emotion, desire, and will. Therefore, Buddhists seek the state of definite emptiness through meditation. Later Buddhism developed Buddha's thoughts, and taught that everybody have a potentiality to become Buddha.¹² Nirvana is attained only by one's own effort and discipline. This puts the emphasis on the individual practicing meditation in order to attain emancipation through the Enlightenment. The discipline of meditation was developed by the name of Chamsun in Korea and Zen in Japan.

Even though Buddhist meditation and Christian contemplative prayer have a tremendous difference in the theology and the world view, there is a similarity between them, which is the way of negation, the apophatic way, to reach the goal. Furthermore, the strict ascetic discipline of the Buddhist monk has a similarity with that of Christian monk in the monasticism, although the final goal is essentially different. The goal of Christian contemplative prayer is to reach union with God effortlessly through the apophatic way or kataphatic way. The goal of the apophatic way is to reach no-thingness. On the contrary, the goal of kataphatic way is to accomplish the state of fullness.

¹¹ Ibid., 113.

¹² Ibid., 134.

However, the goal of Buddhist meditation is to attain emptiness. This emptiness is not the opposite of fullness in the sense of Western tradition. Nyogen Senzaki and Ruth Strout McCandless point out that emptiness is a term used in Buddhism that has caused considerable misunderstanding in the Western mind. When Buddhists speak of emptiness, they do not intend it to signify the opposite of fullness, but rather that unconditioned state in which there is nothing to be given and nothing to be received.¹³ In spite of the difference between them, Buddhist meditative methodology could help to develop the contemplative prayer of Korean Christian as a religious and cultural background of the Korean context.

Confucianism

Confucianism is an East Asian ethical, philosophical, political, or religious system originally developed from the teaching of the early Chinese sage Confucius. Like many of the great philosophers and religious leaders, Confucius did not keep records of his own words and deeds. Instead, the texts that made up Confucianism are recordings from his disciples. However, Confucianism has developed through a long historical journey, and played a role of major ethical, philosophical, political, and religious foundation in China and Korea.

Confucianism was introduced to Korea earlier than Buddhism. Before the Yi dynasty; however, Buddhism had been the national religion, but Confucianism had been the principles of the political system in Korea. The Yi dynasty attempted to change the dual structure of Buddhism and Confucianism, which dictated the social conventions of

¹³ Nyogen Senzaki and Ruth Strout McCandless, eds. and trans., Buddhism and Zen (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 22.

the daily life of the people, into the monolithic unity of Confucian morality.¹⁴ The Yi dynasty's adoption of Confucianism as the foundational idea for the nation resulted in a new legal code following Confucian ideas. Furthermore, Confucianism had to play a role of national religion instead of Buddhism due to the politics of the Yi dynasty. Even though Confucianism emphasizes human morality in society, it has religious characteristics in it.

Confucius taught the mandate of Heaven, but he pushed the teaching further, saying that in the will of Heaven that there is an appointment for everyone and everything. This sense of calling was understood in terms of a man's inner disposition. The virtuous man knew his calling or appointment by means of inner awareness.¹⁵ This appointment classified social structure, and brought ritual into a secular moral behavior. Ritual in Confucianism, which has a different connotation than ritual in Western religion, is a relational virtue which refers to the propriety or politeness in everyday life. Ritual can be seen as a means to find the balance between opposing qualities that might otherwise lead to conflict. Ritual classifies people and builds hierarchical relationship through ceremonies, which provide each one's form of behavior and virtue. Thus, one of the central topics in Confucianism is relational virtue and the different duties arising from the different status one holds in relation to others, such as loyalty in the relationship between servant and king, and filial duty in the relationship between parents and son. Especially, in the religious aspect of Confucianism, the virtue of filial duty extended to ancestor worship.

¹⁴ I-Sop Hong, , "Political Philosophy of Korean Confucianism," in Main Currents of Korean Thought, ed. by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (Seoul: Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers; Arch Cape, OR: Pace International Research, 1983), 163.

¹⁵ Hutchison, 234.

In relation to prayer, one can find a unique form of petitionary prayer in the ancestor worship of Confucianism. In Korean Confucianism, there were two kinds of rites mixed with other religious elements. Chung Chai-Sik points out that in Korea there were two types of traditional rites: Cult of Heaven, that is, worship of and sacrifices to the Ruler Above or Sovereign on High (Sangje); and sacrifices to various spiritual beings including one's ancestors.¹⁶ The duty of worship to Heaven belonged to the king. However, ordinary people worship their ancestors with tablets and foods. They believe that when they prepare food for an ancestor and show their filial duty to the dead ancestor, the spirit of the dead ancestor comes to them to bless them.

There was no pure Confucian religious feature in the religious history of Korea because every imported thought and religion was mixed with or absorbed by aboriginal thoughts and religions. Furthermore, the theoretical structure of Confucianism in Korea has been changed by Korean scholars. However, Korean Confucianism shows a kind of intercessory and petitional prayer form practiced by the king and ordinary people. The king asks Heaven for blessings of the nation through a rite, and ordinary people ask their ancestors for blessings on their homes. Since there is no dualistic world view in Confucianism, one cannot find a contemplative prayer form in the sense of Christian contemplation. However, Confucians reflect themselves on whether they practice moral virtues faithfully or not in everyday. Every Confucian knows that Mencius, one of the famous disciples of Confucius, asserts that a virtuous man has to reflect on oneself three times a day. This reflection is a kind of meditation, although it is a moral reflection on

¹⁶ Chai-Sik Chong, Korea: The Encounter Between the Gospel and Neo-Confucian Culture (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997), 10.

oneself, not an ultimate being. This could serve as a background to develop Christian contemplative prayer in the Korean context.

Tongsung Prayer

The Korean Protestant church started officially with the arrival of two American missionaries, Henry G. Appenzeller and Horace G. Underwood, although some Protestant missionaries had tried to bring the Gospel to Korea privately. About twenty years after the arrival of the official missionaries, the Korean church had a great turning point for revival and prayer. Great revival movements in Wonsan in 1904 and in Pyongyang in 1907 developed Korean Christianity. In the perspective of prayer in the Korean Protestant church, Tongsung prayer is a unique and influential prayer. The form of Tongsung prayer is to pray with a loud voice altogether in the community. This prayer style has dominated the prayer meetings in the Korean Protestant church. The Tongsung prayer could be found in the revival meeting in Pyongyang in the year 1907. The content of the first Tongsung prayer was repentance. During the revival meeting, many people, including the missionaries, confessed their sins in front of people and God, and then they started to pray for repentance together, with a loud voice. Jong Chun Park evaluates the Great Revival in 1907 like this:

The missionaries' report about the Great Revival in 1907 usually described the collective confession of sin and of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is worthy to note that any open confession of sin was an alien practice for East Asian.¹⁷

The Korean people, who are oriented by religions of self-cultivation like Buddhism and Confucianism, had difficulty in confessing their sins in front of the

¹⁷ Jong Chun Park, Crawl with God, Dance in the Spirit: A Creative Formation of Korean Theology of the Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 20.

transcendent God. However, Tongsung prayer led them to experience their repentance in the presence of the Holy Spirit in the meeting. This form of Tongsung prayer was practiced in regular church meetings like the early morning prayer meeting. The practice of early morning prayer was first introduced by Kil Sun Joo as part of the 1907 Great Revival. However, the content of Tongsung prayer has changed with political and social changes in the modern history of Korea.

As James Huntley Grayson mentions, the three most important influences on Korean history in the last century are the transmission of Protestant Christianity, the imposition of Japanese colonial rule, and the Korean War.¹⁸ Each political and social influence has changed the contents of Tongsung prayer. Repentance-dominated Tongsung prayer had changed to intercessory Tongsung prayer for the nation during the Japanese colonial period and the Korean War. After the Korean War, people prayed for material blessings to escape from poverty. Especially, in the 1970's, there was a strong prayer mountain movement in the Korean Protestant church. Tongsung prayer had a major role in this movement. However, the content of the prayer in this movement was petition for material blessings, although there were also repentance, thanksgiving, intercessory, and mystical phenomena.

The Tongsung prayer tradition in the Korean Protestant church has two forms of prayer. One form is the individual Tongsung prayer for personal repentance and petition with a loud voice simultaneously when others pray in the same way in the prayer meeting. The other form is group Tongsung prayer for intercession with loud voices at the same time when the presider gives an object of intercessory prayer one by one. The Tongsung prayer is practiced in the early morning prayer meeting or in special prayer meetings.

¹⁸ Grayson, 194.

After the Great Revival, Tongsung prayer had been influenced by other aboriginal religious characteristics. A shamanistic attitude especially influenced Tongsung prayer, which had transformed to the petition-dominated prayer style for material blessings. Before the coming of Christianity to Korea, ordinary women had an early morning prayer time. They climbed a nearby hillside before dawn, and offered clear water to the spirits of the mountain, or other spirits, praying for family blessings, protection of family members, and the success of the family business. This ardent religious practice was transferred to the Korean Protestant church.¹⁹

Even though during Tongsung prayer people confess their sins, and have special imaginations, spiritual joys, or spiritual darkness, Tongsung prayer in Korean Protestant church is a petition-dominated prayer, far from contemplative prayer. Since contemplative prayer is perhaps the most powerful stream in the prayer tradition in the history of Christianity, the Korean Protestant church needs to open its eyes to the great treasure of prayer tradition in Western Christianity. I expect that practicing contemplative prayer could help the Korean Protestant church to grow up spiritually. As I try to show, the ground of features in the Korean religious history includes some similar characteristics as contemplative prayer, although they are not exactly same forms and structures.

¹⁹ David Suh, "Daybreak Prayer Meeting," in A Dictionary of Asian Christianity, ed. Scott W. Sunquist (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001), 227.

Chapter 5

Contemplative Prayer Exercise Program in the Zion Korean United Methodist Church

Description of the Project

The purpose of the present project is to explore how contemplative prayer, as a supplementary tool in prayer, can perform a role to broaden understanding of the concept of prayer and help the Korean Protestant church to enrich its experience of a new prayer life. For that purpose, I have discussed many preliminary issues such as the concept of contemplative prayer, the substantial features of the five major contemplative prayers, contemplative prayer in the Bible, and the prayer forms in the religions of the history of Korea. Now I will examine the result of the possibility for adopting contemplative prayer, that is, prayer which leads people to contemplation. This result is shown by the experimental method.

The Role of the Writer

In the present project, the writer played the following roles. First of all, he called for a meeting of the church planning committee, which is the principal church committee that decides all the policies and programs in the parish. At the meeting, he explained this project and requested the help of the church.

Second, the writer recruited the members of the prayer exercise group, and created one group for the project. Characteristics of the members were analyzed,

including the prayer life, through pre-program questionnaires. He developed a strategy to apply contemplative prayer to their prayer life.

Third, the writer arranged the schedule for the contemplative prayer exercise program. He arranged seven courses including an introduction, Cassian's prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition, Ignatius of Loyola's imaginative prayer, and final evaluation meeting. At an introduction session, he presented the importance of this program and explained the schedule and homework. In this time he surveyed the pre-program questionnaires about participants' prayer lives. At each session, he briefly explained the characteristics of each contemplative prayer, and taught how to pray in the way of each contemplative prayer.

During each session, participants practiced each tradition of contemplative prayer, and had time for discussion and questions. The exercise of each contemplative prayer continued at home with regular homework. In each session, participants reviewed any difficulties they had in practicing each prayer form. Also they brought some experiences of the prayer exercise at home. The writer encouraged the participants to write a journal for analyzing the experience of contemplative prayer exercises at home. Each session was two hours. In the last session, the writer provided a final evaluation meeting to check out the results of the application of contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant church context. After gathering all the processes and information, and analyzing post-program questionnaires, he was ultimately able to assess the effectiveness and importance of the contemplative prayer. He reported the results of the project to all the congregation

and received a very positive response from them. As a result, many of them expressed that they would like to participate in the program next time.

The Zion United Methodist Church and the Korean Immigrant Protestant Church

A brief description of the Zion Korean United Methodist church in Carson City, California, and the situation of the Korean immigrant Protestant church is very helpful to understand the contemplative prayer exercise program for the Zion Korean United Methodist Church. I had served this church as an associate pastor from September, 2000 to 2003. In 1975, the Zion Korean United Methodist Church started with 12 families worshipping in Torrance, California. In 1979, the Church joined the United Methodist Church. While Zion Korean United Methodist Church started with 12 families, the congregation grew rapidly until the middle of the 1990's. In 1995, Sunday regular attendance was over 600, but the church had a painful experience that caused over 300 members to leave the church in 1995. Now, Sunday regular attendance is 240 in Korean worship and 50 in English worship. All congregation members are either first generation immigrants who speak Korean or second generation who speak English.

It seems to me that the rapid growth of Zion Korean United Methodist Church was affected by three elements. Basically, the increase in the number of Korean immigrants in the United States gave a chance for church growth. Even though Korean immigrant history to America started 100 years ago in Hawaii, the real large migration to North America started in the 1970's. The senior pastor of the Zion Korean United Methodist Church was an early immigrant to Los Angeles. After 1970, many Korean immigrants settled down in Los Angeles. In Korea, Christians are a quarter of the

population. As such it could be supposed that a quarter of all immigrants were Christian. Nevertheless, almost all immigrants went to the Church because of the following three reasons. First, the Church helped the settlement of immigrants. There were only two Korean churches in Torrance, California in 1970. All immigrants who got aid to settle down in the Torrance area began to go to the church though they were not Christians. Second, the Church has been a cultural center. Every Sunday, Korean immigrants have gathered together in Church and shared their experiences and talked with each other and pacified their yearnings to be with Koreans. The church has played a cohesive role for immigrants in America. Third, for their economic life, they had to go to the church because they could get information and chances to get jobs. People say that their new jobs in Los Angeles depend on who picks them up when they arrive at the Los Angeles Airport. In addition, they needed to have faith because their experience in the new world was like the Israelites' desert life.

However, these features brought many problems to the Korean immigrant church because there had been little spiritual development and direction with the rapid quantitative growth of the Korean immigrant Church. Since the number of Korean immigrant churches increased from the late 1980's, people began to choose a church where they could get more benefits, power, and honor instead of spiritual concerns and development. A lot of people came to one church and left it after a few weeks. Second, as I already mentioned, there were only two Korean churches in Torrance: one was Methodist, the other was Presbyterian. Therefore, people who came from various denominations gathered together in my church. In 1995, seven lay leaders and over 300 congregation members who came from other denominations left my church and went to a

Presbyterian church. On the surface, it was a denominational problem. This was evidence that there had not been an abundance of spiritual training for reconciliation between each denomination.

Unlike most Korean churches, which have everyday early-morning prayer meeting and Friday late night prayer meeting, the immigrant Korean churches have differing frequencies of prayer meetings, depending upon the situations of the churches. The Zion Korean United Methodist Church had only one early-morning prayer service per week on Sunday, and did not have a Friday late prayer meeting.

However, this does not mean that the Korean immigrant church has been lazy about spiritual life, although the number of meetings and services is less than it is in Korea. The Zion Korean United Methodist Church has kept the Korean church tradition and gathered enthusiastically. The local Church has performed its functions both as a gathering community and as a witnessing community. As a gathering community, there are three Sunday morning services, a Sunday afternoon service, a Wednesday night Bible study, a Sunday morning Bible study, a Sunday early morning prayer service, and Friday class meetings (seven class meetings). Each class meeting has a prayer time for a formal or Tongsung prayer.

As a witnessing community, there are also five women's and four men's mission societies for mission duties and service roles. Every meeting has prayer time officially or unofficially. For example, after the sermon of the Sunday afternoon service, a presider or preacher often unofficially leads Tongsung prayer for about five minutes. In the Bible study meeting, there is always time for many kinds of prayers. Even though the Zion

Korean United Methodist Church has many prayer times, the church should develop its members' spirituality deeper and higher.

Although there are many prayer opportunities at the Zion Korean United Methodist Church there have been many spiritual problems, such as prayer for just materialistic blessing and petition. The church should make it a spiritual practice to develop the members' spirituality. It seems to me that contemplative prayer is the best way to develop the local church members' spirituality because contemplative prayer pursues a living with the presence of God in daily life.

Not only the Korean immigrant Christians but also the Protestant churches in Korea could fulfill their spiritual longings through contemplative prayer because contemplation is a mark of a fully mature Christian life. A joyful life could be achieved not by fulfillment of earthly desire but by surrender fully to mystery's all embracing Spirit of love. Experiencing union with God could lead us to the mystical experience. Contemplative prayer could lead Korean immigrant Christians and Christians in Korea to a state of contemplation and a more fully mature Christian life.

Analysis of Participants

I recruited ten participants. On the first session, they filled out a pre-program questionnaire. This questionnaire is to acquire the information to analyze the participants' engagement with prayer (see Appendix).

Through the analysis of this pre-program questionnaire, the ten participants' characteristics can be summarized as follows. The ten people are all lay members of the church. Six of them are female, and four are male. The range of ages is 21 years old to

39 years old. Six of these people said their prayer practice was personal centered; two said their prayer practice was communal centered; and, one person said that their prayer practice was both personal and communal centered. Half of them said that they participated in their church's prayer meetings or community's prayer life regularly, while the other half said they did not. These members all agreed that they were used to Tongsung prayer and that this way of prayer is practiced most in their church. Two-thirds were satisfied with their Tongsung-dominate church prayer life, but one-third were discontent with this type of prayer. However, almost all participants believed that their church's prayer meetings and style leads them to a deeper spiritual stage, if they attend the meetings faithfully. Despite the fact that they all are familiar with the Tongsung prayer, most members believed that their church needs to supplement the present prayer style to reach deeper spiritual level. Nine of them said that their major content of Tongsung prayer is petition. Only one said their major content was praising. Nine of these people did not know about contemplative prayer, but one person did. They had expectations that if contemplative prayer was introduced to them and they practiced it often they will have a better understanding of prayer and have a deeper spiritual life. They all agreed that prayer style and content can strongly influence Christians' spiritual life. Even though they are Koreans who are most familiar to petition-dominate Tongsung prayer, and they are fairly satisfied with it, they still expected an abundant spiritual experience through the exercise.

Project Design

The plan consists of seven sessions which include an introductory session, five weeks contemplative prayer exercise courses for applying those to the Korean Protestant context, and a final evaluation session. Each session is two hours. On each Sunday, the meeting for practicing each prayer has held in the church. Daily, each member was to practice the given prayer exercise by himself or herself.

The First Week: Introduction to contemplative prayer and prayer traditions

As reflected in the pre-program questionnaires, almost all participants practiced a petition-dominated Tongsung prayer in their prayer life. Following the purpose of the project, I introduced the various prayer traditions in the history of Christian spirituality in order to overcome the narrow understanding of the concept of prayer in the Korean Protestant church. And I introduced the concept of the contemplative prayer. Also I presented the schedule of the program in detail. And all participants finished the pre-questionnaires, and turned in it to the writer.

The Second Week: Cassian's Prayer in Desert Father's Tradition

When we gathered in the meeting room, I prayed for the meeting and the participants first. And I presented the characteristics of the Cassian's prayer in the Desert Father's tradition. After that, I led the practice of Cassian's prayer following the direction. I used a centering prayer practice for Cassian's prayer which removes thought, image, and emotion. In order to apply the contemplative prayer to the Korean context, I revised each contemplative prayer direction to be comfortable with the Korean atmosphere.

Prayer Exercise Direction for Cassian's Prayer

1. Position your body comfortably, spine erect, on a chair, cushions, or floor.¹
 2. While you breathe in and out regularly for concentration, choose a sacred word for this period of prayer. If you are uncertain about what sacred word to try first, try a word with no lexical meaning, such as a sigh like: "Ahhh," "Hum," or "'Ha." This will prevent you from making discursive associations to your word.
 3. Close your eyes and experience the stream of sensations that course through your physical body. No need to change them. No need to judge them. Simply let yourself feel deeply the multitude of sensations that cascade through your body. Gently focus on the sensations in your head...in your neck and shoulders...your elbows...your wrists and the palms of your hands...the sensations in your knees...your ankles and the soles of your feet.
 4. Now move your attention up to the region of your heart and establish here. If you have trouble establishing your attention in the heart, imagine that every inhalation pushes the sphere of energy around your head downward an inch or so along your spinal column, until your attention finally comes to rest in your heart.
 5. Open yourself to the Presence of God. When your attention drifts away God's Presence, say your sacred word gently, as if laying a feather on a fluff of cotton. As you say the sacred word, allow your intention to be with the Divine to move you back to your deepest center.
 6. Let yourself rest here for the time you have set apart for your meditation.
- (To close your meditation)
7. When you are ready, let yourself come back to the place. Let the feeling return to your feet...your hands...your face. Take a deep breath, then open your eyes.²

After finishing this prayer practice, most participants confessed a difficulty to keep their attention to the presence of God. I encouraged them to say, "This is a reason why we need to exercise the prayer regularly at home." They promised to keep exercising the prayer faithfully at home to experience a new spiritual world.

The Third Week: Lectio Divina in the Benedictine Tradition

¹ In Korean tradition, Koreans are used to sitting on the floor in meditation form.

² Kiasch, 236-37. For centering prayer, I would like to mainly follow the prayer directions of Dr. Ken Kiasch, but revised a little for Koreans.

After the beginning prayer, all participants reviewed their prayers during the past weekdays, and shared their experiences. After sharing it, the writer presented the characteristics of the lectio divina in the Benedictine tradition. After that, he led the practice of lectio divina following the direction.

The Biblical passage we used is Luke 22:39-46.

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep exhausted from sorrow. "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."

Prayer Exercise Direction

1. Select the best place and time to pray without disturbance. Position your body comfortably, spine erect, on a chair, cushions, or floor with your Bible. Prepare yourself for prayer in singing a hymn or breathe in and out attentively.³
2. Slowly begin reading a biblical passage, reading it again and again until a word or phrase strikes you, grabs you, invites you to it, or somehow seems to attract you.
3. Enter into that word or phrase, and let it enter into you, by slowly, attentively repeating it again and again, ruminating over it.
4. Reflect on, meditate on, what the word or phrase offers you, or on its meaning in your life, or on how you respond to it.
5. Rest silently with God, contemplating God, waiting for what God offers, simply open to God without actively attempting to communicate anything to God.
6. Actively express to God the prayers that rise out of your prayerful experience of the word or phrase.⁴

³ Singing a hymn is a well oriented method to prepare to pray in Korean Christian tradition.

⁴ Dreitcer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," lectio divina. I followed the prayer directions of Dr. Andrew Dreitcer.

For exercising lectio divina at home, I recommended any Psalms from 120 to 150 as Biblical passages.

The Fourth Week: Jesus Prayer in the Orthodox Tradition

When we gathered in the meeting room, one participant prayed for the meeting and the participants first. And then we reviewed the practices of lectio divina at home. And I presented the characteristics of the Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition. After that, I led the practice of Jesus prayer following the direction.

Prayer Exercise Direction

1. Position your body comfortably, spine erect, on a chair, cushions, or floor.
2. Close your eyes, and practice the breath following the physical rhythm. For listen to your physical rhythm, concentrate on your pulse of the heart. Breathe in and out regularly following your physical rhythm for a while.
3. While you breathe in and out, open your awareness to feel God's Presence right here with you. Feel that Presence all around you...within you. Breathe in the Divine with every breath. Breathe God out. Let yourself rest in this Presence.
4. Now, with your breath, slowly say the words, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me... Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me." Let your mouth and heart repeat these words over and over again, feeling God's Presence right here with you.
6. If you have a trouble to concentrate on the breath and worlds, be patient with yourself. Gently bring your attention back to the operations of this meditation: feel God's Presence; put your head in your heart; and say the words, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me."

(To close your prayer)

7. When you are ready to finish the prayer, stop the words and only breathe smoothly and tenderly. Open your eyes.

I gave them more prayer direction for the daily life. The Jesus prayer can be practiced in not only a limited peaceful place and time, but also anytime they want;

during driving, cooking, cleaning, or walking. Just repeat the words, “Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me,” in anywhere and anytime.

The Fifth Week: Cloud of Unknowing

When we gathered in the meeting room, a participant prayed for the meeting and the participants first. We discussed the effectiveness of the Jesus prayer. And I presented the characteristics of the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition. After that, I led the practice of Cloud of Unknowing following the direction.

Prayer Exercise Direction

1. Position your body comfortably, spine erect, on a chair, cushions, or floor.
2. Ground yourself in your physical sensations. Close your eyes and slowly become aware of the sensations of your physical body. Feel the sensations as they flow through you. The sensations in your head...in your neck and shoulders...your elbows...your wrists and the palms of your hands...the sensations in your knees...your ankles and the soles of your feet.
3. Now create a cloud of unknowing that is between you and to your God. No matter how much you hope to know God, you can never know Him through the intellect. You can never hope to penetrate that cloud, that darkness. There is nothing that you can do to overcome this barrier. Consciously place this barrier between yourself and God.
4. Now put beneath yourself the cloud of forgetting. This is to be an active process at first, and only gradually quieting. Every time a memory or a thought or a feeling arises in your awareness, put it beneath your cloud of forgetting. Let nothing distract you. Every time a distraction arises, place it beneath this cloud.
5. Between the cloud of unknowing above you, and the cloud if forgetting beneath you, became aware of those sudden impulses of love for God. Lift your heart up to God, who “by his grace called you to this exercise. Here no other thought of God...a simple reaching out directly towards God is sufficient.”
6. If you find yourself having difficulty maintaining your focus in God, use a word to stabilize your attention. Choose a short word of one syllable such as “Jooye” or “Sarang.”⁵ Repeat this word over and over again. “Fasten this word to your heart, so that whatever happens it will never go away.... With this word you are to beat upon this cloud and this darkness above you. With this word you are to strike down every kind of thought under the cloud of forgetting.”

⁵ “Jooye” means Lord, and “Sarang” means love in Korean.

7. When you find your attention wandering, don't scold yourself. Gently bring your attention back to the impulses of love which spring up in your heart. Direct these toward your God.⁶

The Sixth Week: Ignatius' Imaginative Prayer in the Ignatian Tradition

When we gathered in the meeting room, a participant prayed for the meeting and the participants first. We shared many difficulties to practice the Cloud of Unknowing. I encouraged them to keep the practice of the prayer. And I presented the characteristics of the Ignatius' imaginative prayer in the Ignatian tradition. After that, I led the practice of the prayer following the direction.

Prayer Exercise Direction

After choosing a passage from the Bible that describes an event or situation.....

The given Biblical passage for this prayer practice is Luke 22:54-62,

Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

1. Select the best place and time to pray without disturbance. Position your body comfortably, spine erect, on a chair, cushions, or floor with your Bible. Prepare yourself for prayer in singing a hymn or breathe in and out attentively.
2. Slowly begin reading a biblical passage, reading it again and again slowly and reflectively..
3. Relax, close your eyes.

⁶ Kaisch, 224-26.

4. Imagine yourself within the situation and events described in the passage. Perhaps you identify with one of the figures in the passage, or perhaps are there just as you are. You can identify yourself with Jesus. You can identify yourself with Peter. You can identify yourself with a servant girl. You can stand in the scene as a spectator. Experience the situation through all the senses. What do I see? What do I smell? What do I hear? What do I feel? What do I taste? What do I think? Let your imagination develop. Perhaps you will begin a conversation with one or more of the persons in the passage. Feel everything in the scene.

5. Finish your prayer with expressing thanks to God.

Following Professor Andrew Dreitcer's direction, I led them to write down the perceptions and insights that have arisen from the prayer, to draw them, or model them in clay...etc.⁷

The Last meeting to reflect overview

The last meeting was held on Sunday to review the process and practices. The members shared their experiences and testimonies. They discussed the difficulties of the contemplative prayer, and I gave them tips and my experiences to make it easier for them. They compared and contrasted the Tongsung prayer and the contemplative prayer to understand the various forms and styles of the prayer and to broaden the concept of prayer. The participants discussed the affect of this contemplative prayer exercise program for the Korean Protestant church. They filled out the post-program questionnaire (see Appendix) for the evaluation of this program. Some of them wrote their journals for the prayer exercise. However, they did not want to share them because of Korean face culture. I received information of the journals by personal meeting.

Evaluation

I evaluated the contemplative prayer exercise program through the discussions and confessions in the final meeting, the post-program questionnaire, and the information of their journals by the personal meeting. Even though there are many barriers of

⁷ Dreitcer, class materials, "Prayer Traditions," imaginative prayer.

practicing contemplative prayer because it is not familiar with the Korean church context, they thought the practice of contemplative prayer could lead them to an abundant prayer experience and the broadening of their comprehension of concept of prayer. Through the post-program questionnaires, eighty percent answered that the prayer exercise program helped them to understand the concept of prayer and increasing their conceptual understanding of God. When I asked if the contemplative prayer practice helps you to experience their physical mystical experiences or emotional experiences, they answered evenly, each two answering strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.

This suggests that they followed the contemplative prayer practice well since the four forms of contemplative prayer are apophatic way, which means renouncing thought, image, and, emotion. The participants believed that the contemplative prayer could supplement the Tongsung prayer. Seven people either strongly agreed or agreed on this topic on the post-program questionnaire. However, when they were asked if they think contemplative prayer is more suitable for Korean Christians, most answered negatively, while the other twenty percent answered positively. This means that since the Korean Christians are not used to meditation and quiet prayer, they need more practice in contemplative prayer. Seventy percent of the participants, though, answered positively when they were asked if they would keep contemplative prayer in their prayer life. Thirty percent answered neutrally. This shows that contemplative prayer can be attractive to Korean Christians, even though it is not practiced as much.

From the five forms of contemplative prayer, the participants said that their favorite forms were Jesus Prayer and Ignatius' Imaginative Prayer. Not only do modern Korean Christians have difficulties when practicing apophatic contemplative prayer but

also Western contemporary Christians have the same difficulties when practicing apophatic contemplative prayer, such as Cloud of Unknowing and Centering prayer because we live in a world that has a lot of stimulation of the senses. However, I find there are possibilities of application for the contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant church context.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Korean Protestant Christians have a great zeal of enthusiasm for their prayer life. Korean Protestant churches also provide many prayer meetings in their community life. Furthermore, no one can deny that one of the elements for the Korean church's rapid growth is an emphasis on the prayer. However, even though the Korean Protestant church has a strong prayer practice, the petition dominated Tongsung prayer, which is a major prayer form and style in the Korean Protestant church, leads Korean Christians to a narrow understanding of the concept of the prayer and too often places emphasis on the material blessing.

It is important for all faithful Christians to develop their spirituality through an active prayer life. There have been various prayer traditions in the history of Christian spirituality. Contemplative prayer is one of the profound prayer traditions because contemplative prayer seeks an experience of the union with God through various prayer styles. A contemplative prayer is a spiritual communication between God and oneself who is caught up by God beyond one's own effort.

The purpose of this study examines contemplative prayer and its potential role in the Korean Protestant church context to broaden the spiritual experiences of Korean Protestant Christians by supplementing Tongsung prayer. For this purpose, this study has been three-fold. The first is to understand contemplative prayer. The second is to find a common ground or similar prayer form and style as a basis of applying contemplative

prayer to the Korean context. The third is to test the possibility of the application by designing a contemplative prayer exercise program for a local congregation. In this case, it is the Zion Korean United Methodist Church in Carson City, California.

Contemplative prayer can be categorized by the ways of prayer: an apophatic prayer way and a kataphatic prayer way. The apophatic way, rooted in a Platonic world view and the transcendental theology, is the way of negation of concepts, symbols, feelings, and senses in an approach toward God. On the other hand, the kataphatic way, which is derived from Aristotle's philosophical perspective and incarnational theology, is the way of attempting to approach God through intellectual, emotional, sensory, and visual methods. The apophatic prayer includes Cassian's prayer in the Desert Father's tradition, *lectio divina* in the Benedictine tradition, Jesus prayer in the Orthodox tradition, and the Cloud of Unknowing in the British tradition. The kataphatic prayer includes Ignatius of Loyola's prayer in the Ignatian tradition.

There are contemplative prayers which use Biblical passages for the prayer. Cassian uses the Bible to reach the purity of heart. *Lectio divina* uses the Bible as a fundamental resource of the prayer. Jesus prayer uses the short Biblical words as a main tool of the prayer. Ignatius' imaginative prayer starts with a Biblical reading, although the process of holy reading is definitely different from *lectio divina* in the Benedictine tradition. Even though many contemplative prayers use the Bible for their prayers, there is no exact contemplative prayer form or style in the Bible. Rather, contemplative prayer was developed during the start of monasticism.

An introduction for Korean Protestant Christians to various prayer forms and styles is helpful to broaden their understanding of the concept of prayer. Even though

Korean Protestant Christians are not familiar with contemplative prayer, they have the background to adopt contemplative prayer as a supplementary source for spiritual formation. In the Korean religious context, there are some similar prayer forms and styles with contemplative prayer, although Korean religions such as Shamanism, Buddhism, and Confucianism do not have an idea of the relationship between God and a human being as in the Western sense.

Almost all Korean Protestant Christians are used to praying with the Tongsung prayer, which is a petition-dominated prayer for material blessings at the present time. However, Tongsung prayer started with repentance in the Great Revival Movement at Pyongyang, Korea in the early twentieth century. The features of the Tongsung prayer have changed following Korean political, economical, cultural changes. Basically, Tongsung prayer mingled with Shamanistic attitude, namely, the asking for the solving of problems and material blessings. Therefore, the Korean Protestant Christians should supplement Tongsung prayer which has a narrow understanding of the concept of prayer.

Through a contemplative prayer exercise program at the Zion Korean United Methodist Church, I confirmed the possibility of using contemplative prayer in the Korean Protestant church. Even though there are some obstacles to practice contemplative prayer by using the apophatic way, Korean Christians can overcome the difficulties through an enthusiasm of prayer and an expectation of reaching the resting with God. Analysis of the pre-program questionnaires and post-program questionnaires shows the positive results of the project. Through the conversations and discussions in the each session, I have confidence that the Korean Protestant Christians can have abundant spiritual experiences through the contemplative prayer. As we can see in the

analysis of the post-program questionnaires, seventy percent of the participants answered positively when they were asked if they would keep contemplative prayer in their prayer life. Thirty percent answered neutrally. This suggests that contemplative prayer is very attractive to Korean Christians, even though they need more practice to be comfortable with some apophatic prayers.

Contemplative prayer should be introduced to Korean Protestant Christians. However, the Korean Protestant church needs to design various contemplative prayer exercise programs for their members. Such programs would lead the Korean Protestant Christians to a wider understanding of prayer and a deeper practice of prayer. I believe that various kinds of contemplative prayer can be practiced among all Korean Protestant Christians.

Although Korean Protestant Christians have strong prayer lives through Tongsung prayer, the use of contemplative prayer by Korean Protestant Christians can produce a wider understanding of prayer and an experience of spiritual joy which will permit exploration of a new spiritual prayer world.

Appendix

Questionnaires for Program Participants

Pre-Program Questionnaires

Please check the answer which is the closest to your opinion and situation.

1. Are you an ordained pastor or a layperson?
1) Ordained Pastor 2) Layperson
2. Is your prayer practice communal centered or personal centered?
1) Personal Centered 2) Communal Centered
3) Others: _____
3. Do you participate in your church's prayer meetings or community's prayer life regularly?
1) Yes 2) No 3) Sometimes
4. What is your church's or community's major prayer style?
1) Tongsung Prayer 2) Quite Prayer
3) Contemplative Prayer 4) Others: _____
5. Are you satisfied by your church's or community's prayer life?
1) Strongly Satisfaction 2) Satisfaction
3) Discontent 4) Strongly discontent
6. Do you believe that your church's or community's prayer style leads you to a deeper spiritual stage?
1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree
3) Disagree 4) Strongly Disagree
7. Do you believe that you or your church need to supplement present prayer style to reach deeper spiritual level?
1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree
8. Do you think that you are familiar to Tongsung prayer?
1) Yes, I do 2) No, I do not
9. If yes, what do you think of the major content of tongsung Prayer?
1) thanksgiving 2) Petition 3) Praising 4) Others: _____
10. Do you know what contemplative prayer is?
1) Yes 2) No 3) A Little

11. If yes, do you think that contemplative can supplement your present prayer style to broaden your understanding and practice of prayer abundantly?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

12. Do you believe that prayer style and content can strongly influence Christians' spiritual life?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

Thank you very much for your response.

Post-Program Questionnaires

Please check the answer which is the closest to your opinion and thinking.

1. Do you think that the prayer exercise program helps you to understand the concept of prayer?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

2. Do you think that contemplative prayer practice helps you to broaden your conceptual understanding God?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

3. Do you think that contemplative prayer practice helps you to experience your physical mystical experience?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

4. Do you think that contemplative prayer practice helps you to experience your emotional experience of God?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

5. Do you think that contemplative prayer practice helps you to have an intention to be involved in your community's prayer life?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

6. Do you think that contemplative prayer practice can supplement Tongsung prayer?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

7. Do you think that contemplative prayer is more suitable prayer style to Korean Christians?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
- 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

8. If yes, please explain the reason.

9. Do you think that Korean protestant church needs contemplative prayer practice program to develop its spirituality?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
- 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

10. Do you think that the prayer practice helps you to develop your spirituality?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
- 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

11. Do you want to keep contemplative prayer in your prayer life?

- 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral
- 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree

12. Which one is the best contemplative prayer practice for you?

- 1) Centering Prayer 2) Jesus Prayer 3) lectio divina
- 4) Cloud of Unknowing 5) Ignatius' imaginative Prayer

Thank you very much for your response.

Bibliography

- Aune, David E. "Prayer in the Greco-Roman World." In Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, 23-42. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Balentine, Samuel E. Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.
- Beasley-Topliffe, Keith, ed. The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003.
- Berger, Klaus. Identity and Experience in the New Testament. Trans. Charles Muenchow. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.
- Brown, Patricia D. "Prayer." In The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation, ed. Keith Beasley-Topliffe, 223-24. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting. Trans. R. H. Fuller. New York: Meridian Books, 1956.
- Casey, Michael. Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina. Liguori, MO: Triumph Books, 1996.
- Cassian, John. John Cassian: The Conferences. Trans. and anno. Boniface Ramsey. Ancient Christian Writers, no. 57. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.
- , John Cassian: The Institutes. Trans. and anno. Boniface Ramsey. Ancient Christian Writers, no. 58. New York: Paulist Press, 1997.
- Chadwick, Owen, trans. Western Asceticism. Library of Christian Classics, v. 12. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958.
- Chang, Tai Hyun. A Study of the Spirituality of Korean Christians: Focused on the Holy Spirit Movement and Shamanism. D.Min. project, Claremont School of Theology, 1988. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1988. 88-16076.
- Charlesworth, James H., Mark Harding, and Mark Kiley, eds. The Lord's Prayer and Other Prayer Texts from the Greco-Roman Era. Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994.
- Choi, Myung Keun. Changes in Korean Society between 1884-1910 as a Result of the Introduction of Christianity. Asian Thought and Culture, v. 20. New York: Peter Lang, 1997.

- Chong, Chai-Sik. Korea: The Encounter Between the Gospel and Neo-Confucian Culture. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997.
- Chun, Shin-Yong, ed. Buddhist Culture in Korea. Korean Culture Series, 3. Seoul: International Cultural Foundation, 1974.
- The Cloud of Unknowing. Trans. into Modern English with an introduction by Clifton Wolters. Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1961.
- Collins, Kenneth J., ed. Exploring Christian Spirituality: An Ecumenical Reader. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.
- Cullmann, Oscar. Prayer in the New Testament: With Answers from the New Testament to Today's Questions. Trans. John Bowden. London: SCM Press, 1995.
- De Mello, Anthony. Contact with God: Retreat Conferences. Chicago: Loyola Press, 1991.
- Dreitcer, Andrew. Class Materials, "Prayer Traditions" (MS 342), Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA, Spring 2002.
- Dupre, Louis, and James A. Wiseman, eds. Light from Light: An Anthology of Christian Mysticism. 2nd ed. New York: Paulist Press, 2001.
- Eaton, J. H. The Contemplative Face of Old Testament Wisdom: In the Context of World Religions. London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989.
- Edwards, Tilden. Living in the Presence: Spiritual Exercises to Open Our Lives to the Awareness of God. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.
- Finkel, Asher. "Prayer in Jewish Life of the First Century as Background to Early Christianity." In Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, 43-65. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Fisher, Fred L. Prayer in the New Testament. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964.
- Freeman, Laurence. Light Within: The Inner Path of Meditation. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1987.
- Fry, Timothy, ed. RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in Latin and English with Notes. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981.
- Funk, Mary Margaret. Thoughts Matter: The Practice of the Spiritual Life. New York: Continuum Publishing, 1998.

Gilson, Etienne. The Philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Ed. G. A. Elrington. Trans. Edward Bullough, from 3rd rev. ed. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1929.

Grayson, James Huntley. Early Buddhism and Christianity in Korea: A Study in the Emplantation of Religion. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985.

-----, Korea: A Religious History. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Hong, I-Sop. "Political Philosophy of Korean Confucianism." In Main Currents of Korean Thought. Ed. by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 162-76. Seoul: Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers; Arch Cape, OR: Pace International Research, 1983.

Huhm, Halla Pai. Kut: Korean Shamanist Rituals. Elizabeth, NJ: Hollym International, 1980.

Hunt, Everett Nichols. Protestant Pioneers in Korea. American Society of Missiology Series, no. 1. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980.

Huntley, Martha. Caring, Growing, Changing: A History of the Protestant Mission in Korea. New York: Friendship Press, 1984.

Hutchison, John A. Paths of Faith. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 1975.

Ivens, Michael. "Ignatius Loyola." In The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, 357-62. London: SPCK, 1986.

Jennings, Amy Sturdivant. "Contemplation." In The Upper Room Dictionary of Christian Spiritual Formation, ed. Keith Beasley-Topliffe, 67. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2003.

Joachim, Harold H. Aristotle, the Nicomachean Ethics: A Commentary. Ed. D. A. Rees. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951.

Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, eds. The Study of Spirituality. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Kaisch, Ken. Finding God: A Handbook of Christian Meditation. New York: Paulist Press, 1994.

Kang, Wi Jo. Religion and Politics in Korea Under the Japanese Rule. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987.

Kantzer, Kenneth S. "What Happens When Koreans Pray." Christianity Today, Aug. 16, 1993, 13.

- Keating, Thomas. Active Meditations for Contemplative Prayer. New York: Continuum, 1997.
- Kister, Daniel A. Korean Shamanist Ritual: Symbols and Dramas of Transformation. Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1997.
- Knowles, David. The English Mystical Tradition. New York: Harper & Bros., 1961.
- Lane, George A. Christian Spirituality: An Historical Sketch. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1984.
- Lee, Sang Taek. Religion and Social Formation in Korea: Minjung and Millenarianism. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996.
- Levko, John. Cassian's Prayer for the 21st Century. Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 2000.
- Lincoln, Andrew T. "God's Name, Jesus' Name, and Prayer in the Fourth Gospel." In Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, 155-80. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Longenecker, Richard N., ed. Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- McGinn, Bernard. The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century. The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, v. 1. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1994.
- McNeill, William. The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle, and the Ends of Theory. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999.
- Meredith, Anthony. "Philosophical Roots: Greek Philosophy, Wisdom Literature and Gnosis." In The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, 90-94. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Merton, Thomas. New Seeds of Contemplation. New York: New Directions, 1961.
- , Spiritual Direction and Meditation; and, What is Contemplation? Wheathampstead, Herttardshire, Eng.: Anthony Clarke Books, 1975.
- O'Meara, Thomas F. "Thomas Aquinas and Today's Theology." Theology Today 55 (April 1998) : 46-58.
- Paik, L. George. The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910. Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1970.

- Palmer, Spencer J. Korea and Christianity: The Problem of Identification with Tradition. Seoul: Published for the Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, by Seoul Computer Press, 1986.
- Park, Jong Chun. Crawl with God, Dance in the Spirit : A Creative Formation of Korean Theology of the Spirit. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Paulsell, William O. Rules for Prayer. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
- Pennington, M. Basil. Centering Prayer: Renewing an Ancient Christian Prayer Form. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1980.
- Sayers, Sean. Plato's Republic: An Introduction. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999.
- Seifert, Harvey. Explorations in Meditation and Contemplation. Nashville: Upper Room, 1981.
- Seitz, Christopher R. "Prayer in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible." In Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, 3-22. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Senzaki, Nyogen, and Ruth Strout McCandless, eds. and trans. Buddhism and Zen. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953.
- Sheldrake, Philip. Spirituality and History: Questions of Interpretation and Method. Rev. ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995.
- Spearritt, Placid. "Benedict." In The Study of Spirituality, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, 148-56. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Spidlik, Tomas. The Spirituality of the Christian East: A Systematic Handbook. Trans. Anthony P. Gythiel. Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1986.
- Stewart, Columba. Cassian the Monk. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Stierli, Josef. "Ignatian Prayer: Seeking God in All Things." In Ignatius of Loyola: His Personality and Spiritual Heritage, 1556-1956, ed. Friedrich Wulf, 135-63. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977.
- Suh, David. "Daybreak Prayer Meeting." In A Dictionary of Asian Christianity, ed. Scott W. Sunquist, 227. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.
- Sunquist, Scott W., ed. A Dictionary of Asian Christianity. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001.

Tetlow, Joseph A. Ignatius Loyola: Spiritual Exercises. New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992.

Thomas Aquinas. Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. Vol. 2, Man and the Conduct of Life: Summa Contra Gentiles. Ed. Anton C. Pegis. New York: Random House, 1945.

----- . Summa Theologica. Trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. 5 vols. New York: Benziger Bros., 1948. Reprint, Westminster, MD.: Christian Classics, 1981.

Vaage, Leif E., and Vincent L. Wimbush, eds. Asceticism and the New Testament. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Walsh, James. "Application of the Senses." The Way, Supplement no. 27, Spring 1976, 59-68.

-----, ed. The Cloud of Unknowing. New York: Paulist Press, 1981.

The Way of A Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way. Trans. R. M. French. New York: Harper, 1954. Reprint, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1973.

Wiles, Gordon P. Paul's Intercessory Prayers: The Significance of the Intercessory Prayer Passages in the Letters of St. Paul. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Wulf, Friedrich, ed. Ignatius of Loyola: His Personality and Spiritual Heritage, 1556-1556. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977.

Yang, Jay Suh. A Theology of Prayer Reformulated Toward the Korean Church. D.Min. project, Claremont School of Theology, 1983. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 1983. 83-16132.

Korean Books

HankukSahoisayunguhoi. Hyundai Hankukeui Jonggyowa Sahoi (Religion and society in contemporary Korea). Seoul: MoonhakkwajisungSa, 1992.

Huntley, Martha, Caring, Growing, Changing: A History of the Protestant Mission in Korea (Hankook Gaesinkyo Chogieui Sunkkyowa Kyohoi Sungjang). Trans. Cha Jongsoon. Seoul: Mokyangsa, 1985.

Kim, Oi Sik. Hyundai Kohoiwa Youngsung Mokhoi (Contemporary church and spiritual ministry). Seoul: Methodist Theological Seminary Press, 1994.

- Kim, Young-Bong. Sagyumeui Kido (Prayer as fellowship with God). Seoul: Hankookkidokkyo Student Books, 2002.
- Ryu, Dongsik, Hankook Moosokeui Yuksawa Goojo (The History and structure of the Korean Shamanism). Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1986.
- Ryu, Kijong. Kidokkyo Youngsung (Christian spirituality). Seoul: Eunsung, 1997.
- Sin, Hyunsook, trans. Hankookbulkyosa (History of Korean Buddhism), by Kyumjunsewoong. Seoul: Minjoksa, 1987.
- Yoon, Sa Soon. Hankuk Yoohak Sasangnon (The Thoughts of Korean Confucianism). Seoul: Yuleumsa, 1992.